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ABSTRACT

The situation in Hong Kong secondary schools, where teachers of remedial English use some Chinese (Cantonese) in their classes, prompted a study of the question of language use in such classes. A literature review found very few instances of a researcher trying to implement theories or suggestions in a classroom. A needs assessment questionnaire was sent to English-as-a-second-language teachers in 28 schools concerning their language choice and their frustrations in using one or another language in the classroom. In conjunction with the survey, a researcher kept a diary account of her experiences in using both Chinese and English in one remedial English class and only English in another, similar class. The diary account was reviewed in light of English language teaching literature and research, and four general observations are made: (1) complete avoidance of the native language was not possible; (2) some use of Chinese facilitated understanding, motivation, efficiency, and breadth of learning, but overuse and counterproductive use of the native language must be avoided; (3) a teacher strongly committed to the use of English in the classroom found it difficult to avoid reliance on Chinese; and (4) Chinese was used to explain vocabulary only when the translation was seen to enrich the students' general knowledge and when other methods were not succeeding. Implications for English language teaching and research methodology are examined. A questionnaire for Form I English remedial teachers, nine tables, and a bibliography are appended. (MSE)

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A DIARY STUDY OF TEACHING EFL THROUGH ENGLISH AND THROUGH ENGLISH AND CHINESE TO EARLY SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN REMEDIAL ENGLISH CLASSROOMS

A Thesis
Submitted to the Division of English
of the Graduate School
of the Chinese University of Hong Kong

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the
Degree of Master of Philosophy

By

Ho Fong Wan Kam, Belinda

August, 1985

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TO

GOD BE THE GLORY

FOR

HE HAS DONE

GREAT THINGS

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If it had not been for these people, I might have given up long ago. Thanks to them, I did not.

ABSTRACT

Many Hong Kong teachers of remedial English at the secondary level use some Chinese (Cantonese) in their English language classrooms even though the English Advisory Inspecturate of the Education Department and the teacher training colleges encourage the use of English only in EFL lessons. The teachers undoubtedly experience problems, frustrations and uncertainty in their choice and use of language in the English lessons.

In view of this, a needs assessment questionnaire was sent to Form I remedial English teachers in twenty-eight Hong Kong secondary schools to find out more about the present situation regarding language choice in their remedial English classrooms. Growing out of the responses to the questionnaire, this study was designed to explore further the questions of how and why English or both English and Chinese is chosen for use in Form I remedial English classes. The teacher's actual feelings and frustrations experienced in making the language choice are reported in this study to give insight into the value of the medium chosen for the English lesson.

The researcher kept a four month diary of her EFL teaching in two Form I remedial English classes. In one of these, English was used as the language of instruction; in the other, both English and Chinese were used. The diary was then reviewed in relation to the research questions and the relevant English language teaching literature. Four general findings are reported:

(1) Even though it was possible in this study for the teacher to teach English without saying a word in Chinese, it appeared that complete avoidance of the mother tongue was not possible.

(2) There appeared to be some advantages from the teacher's point of view in this study in using Chinese in English lessons, namely, to help students to understand, to motivate students to learn, to help maintain discipline, to give individual help to students, to save time and to help students to gain general knowledge. However it became obvious that care needed to be taken to prevent the overuse of Chinese to avoid counterproductive effects on English language learning.

(3) The teacher strongly committed to an English-only approach when allowing herself to use some Chinese sometimes found it difficult to avoid giving in to an inclination to rely on Chinese, which resulted in an occasional overuse of Chinese.

(4) When the teacher used Chinese to explain vocabulary, she primarily used it to explain only certain types of vocabulary, the translation of which hopefully helped to enrich the general knowledge of the students. However, this was done primarily when other methods seemed not to be succeeding.

Implications for English language teaching and research methodology are discussed and directions for future research are suggested.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 An overview of the problem and objectives of the study

1.1.1 The problem

The language policy in Hong Kong education is described in the government's report "The Hong Kong Education System" as "a highly controversial [issue] at present generating more heat than light" (H.K. Government 1981:113). The key point being discussed is which language, English or Chinese, should be used in teaching content subjects in Hong Kong secondary schools. However, little attention has been given to the problem of language choice in English language classrooms, especially remedial English classrooms. It may have been assumed that there should not be any problem of language choice in English lessons. It seems to be commonly believed that English should be the medium of instruction in English language classrooms. However, the present situation in Hong Kong English classrooms does not always follow this belief.

Most Hong Kong English teachers use a considerable amount of Chinese in their English lessons even though they have been encouraged by the Education Department and teacher training colleges to use English only as far as possible in their English lessons. Undoubtedly, these teachers experience great problems, frustrations and uncertainty in their choice and use of language in the English lessons. The problems are certainly greater in remedial English classes because the students are weak in the language. There is a greater tendency to turn more to the mother tongue for help.

1.1.2 The objectives of this study

In view of such problems, this study has been designed to explore the questions of how and why English or English with some Chinese is chosen for use in Form I English remedial classes. The researcher's feelings and attitudes towards the language chosen and her perception of the value of each medium used will be reported on. Implications for language teaching will also be suggested.

1.2 A description of the problem and objectives

1.2.1 Context of the problem

Before the problem and the objectives of the study are further defined in this section, a brief description of the languages taught and used in Hong Kong schools and remedial English classrooms may help to give the background information necessary for an understanding of the students' situation and the problems facing the teachers.

1.2.1.1 The languages taught in Hong Kong schools

Hong Kong is a British colony in which about 98% of the population is Chinese. Thus, English and Chinese, the official languages in Hong Kong, are taught in schools.

In regard to the Chinese language, which is the mother tongue of most students in Hong Kong, the spoken form used in the majority of schools is Cantonese, a Chinese dialect predominant in the southern Chinese province of Guangdong and Hong Kong. Modern standard Chinese is broadly speaking the written form of Putonghua (China's national language) and is mostly taught in reading and writing. Some classical Chinese, a sophisticated form of the Chinese language, is also taught in secondary schools.

English has a high pragmatic and utilitarian value in Hong Kong (Walker 1979:4) since it is the key to "power, wealth and social status" (Johnson 1984:2). Against the wishes of the Education Department, nearly all kindergartens teach English as a subject mainly in response to parental expectations. English is also taught as a subject in all school curriculum in primary school as well as in secondary school (H.K. Government 1981b:16-17). By the time students get to secondary school, they usually have studied English as a foreign language[1] for around nine years[2].

1.2.1.2 The language used in Hong Kong classrooms

Nearly all kindergartens and primary schools use Chinese as the language of instruction. Only 5.7% of the primary schools are English-medium (H.K. Government 1981b:16-17).

As for secondary schools, the situation is more complicated. There are two main types of schools in Hong Kong, namely Anglo-Chinese schools and Chinese Middle schools.

Ninety percent of the secondary schools are Anglo-Chinese schools (Ho 1985:14-15). In Anglo-Chinese schools, English is supposed to be the medium of instruction used in all subjects except Chinese and Chinese History. In the Chinese Middle schools, however, Chinese is used as the medium of instruction in all subjects except perhaps English. However, there has been a general decline in the academic ability of students following the extension of compulsory education in 1978 from primary level to the first three levels in Hong Kong secondary schools. Many teachers now tend to use more Chinese in their lessons, especially in junior forms, to help the students understand (Man 1983:20).

The government also gives the school authorities the freedom to vary the medium of instruction in their schools for different subjects or class level to meet the needs of the students and the expectations of the parents (H.K. Government 1981b:17). The result in Anglo-Chinese schools is an increasingly wide-spread use of a mixture of English and Chinese[3] in almost all lessons except Chinese and Chinese History in Anglo-Chinese schools.

1.2.1.3 The languages used in English language classrooms

Chinese is used as the medium of instruction in most kindergartens and primary schools. Most children at those levels have not been exposed to English long enough to have acquired the ability to cope with the language adequately. It can be assumed that some Chinese will be used in most English lessons at those two levels.[4]

The situation is not much different at the secondary level. An Education Department officer stated in a public seminar in 1983 that an unofficial survey had been done on the language of instruction used in English language classrooms in secondary schools. The results of the survey appeared to indicate that most Hong Kong English teachers, even those in the best secondary schools, use a considerable amount of Chinese in English lessons.

In other words, most students are exposed to the use of English with some Chinese in nearly all their years of experience as foreign language learners.

1.2.1.4 The language used in Form I remedial English classrooms

The remedial English class system was introduced by the Education Department in Hong Kong in 1982 "to give additional help to pupils who, relative to their own class, are behind in English" (H.K. Government 1981a:1). According to the guidelines given by the Education Department, remedial teaching is focused at the Form I level or the first year in secondary school. Each remedial group should contain no more than 20 students as opposed to a normal class size of 40-45 students. Each school can screen the students in its own way, but the students in the remedial English class must be the group which is weakest in the language.

As regards the problem of language choice, no studies have yet been done to find out what language of instruction is being used by Form I remedial English teachers. However, it is clear that the remedial English teachers are faced with a dilemma. On the one hand, because of the poor English standard of the students, teachers are often tempted to use Chinese to assist the teaching of English. On the other hand, the small size of the remedial group can provide opportunities for the teacher to teach through English by giving individual attention instead of using Chinese. Either choice is highly justifiable. It is really up to individual teachers to make the decision.

1.2.2 The problem

The remedial English teachers certainly experience considerable frustration when they make their language choice. The frustrations may not necessarily be caused by their own language ability although this may sometimes be a factor for some teachers. The reason is that the Education Department expects the school authorities to assign the most experienced English teachers to the remedial classes (H.K. Government 1981a:3), and these authorities will probably choose the teachers specifically trained in language teaching to do the job. The teacher may feel frustrated over the conflicts between the ideal and practice.

The teachers usually base their ideal on the guidance they receive regarding the language policy in English language classrooms. Such guidance mainly comes from two sources, namely the Education Department policy and the teaching theories they learn in the teacher training colleges.

Regarding the Education Department policy, the English syllabus says:

> Since in many Anglo-Chinese schools in Hong Kong, more and more Cantonese is being used in other subjects in Forms I-III, it is essential, in order to ensure maximum exposure to the language, that little or no Cantonese should be used in the English lesson. Occasionally, it may be necessary to use Cantonese to give instructions during the first term in the secondary school but it is not appropriate to use the mother tongue in English lessons, once students have adjusted to their new school (H.K.Government 1983:6).

Obviously, the syllabus only allows an "occasional" use of "a little" Chinese for giving instructions during the first term in secondary school to help students adjust to a new environment. Thus, ideally speaking English should be used as far as possible in English lessons.

As for the theory the teachers learned in the training colleges, Cheng reports that in the 1950s, "In the training colleges, the use of the direct method was advocated in the methodology course" (1983:86). According to most direct methodologists, and as interpreted by Haskell, Prator and Celce-Murcia, no mother tongue should be used in teaching English (Haskell 1978:19; Prator and Celce-Murcia 1979:3). To clarify the present policy on the language of instruction as advocated by English teacher training programmes in Hong Kong now, Mr. William Cheng (the former vice-principal of a College of Education and at present the head of the English Language Unit in the School of Education in The Chinese University) was interviewed[4] . In the interview, Mr. Cheng said that teacher training institutions are still advocating the teaching of English through English even though an occasional judicious use of Chinese is not unacceptable. Thus the trained teachers have an ideal in their minds that English should be used as far as possible in English lessons.

However, when they actually go into the classroom, especially remedial English classrooms in Form I, they find that their ideal cannot easily be put into practice mainly because the students are too weak in the English language to be able to understand the English spoken by the teacher. Even though it may not be necessary for the students to understand every word the teacher says in order to understand the main idea or context, a certain level of English proficiency is needed for basic survival in the classroom. Unfortunately, it was disclosed in the Focus programme (a current issues programme on Hong Kong television) of 13th June 1981 that "40% of the students in Form I were below standard in respect of language attainment" (Cheng 1981:123). Cheng also remarks that "the standards of English at the primary level are not what they should be" (Cheng 1981:123). Thus, the teachers become very frustrated because they find that it is very difficult to put their ideal into practice. Both teachers and students feel an increasing need to use Chinese to help in the teaching and learning of the English language. In such a situation, they are easily tempted to do so.

The remedial English teachers are hence faced with two questions. To what extent should they hold firm to the ideal and how far should they give way to the needs or requests of the students by using Chinese in English lessons? In other words, how much Chinese should they actually use in English lessons and how should they use it?

1.2.3 Objectives of the study

It was in view of the problems and frustrations experienced by the teachers that a needs assessment questionnaire was sent to schools to find out the present situation regarding language choice in remedial Form I English classes.

As a result of the responses to the questionnaire, a diary study of teaching English through English and separately through English with some Chinese to two groups of Form I remedial English students was designed to investigate further the questions related to the language of instruction in Form I remedial EFL classes. What it was in the responses to the questionnaire that prompted the diary study and why a diary study was chosen will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

The objectives of this study were three-fold:

(1) To explore the questions of how English or both English and Chinese are or may be chosen for use in Form I remedial English classes; to examine the specific functions performed in Chinese and their frequency of occurrence;

(2) to investigate why a certain code is chosen by a teacher, to examine the teacher's actual feelings and frustrations experienced in making the language choice in order to throw light on the underlying reasons for the language choice; to investigate legitimate reasons for using

Chinese; and

(3) to explore the teacher's (i.e. the present writer's) feeling and attitude towards the media of instruction that she used and her own perception of the value of each medium.

Implications for EFL teaching and research methodology will be discussed and suggestions for future research will be given.

As this is a diary study, what will be reported on and discussed is confined to the researcher's own personal experience and perceptions. No attempt will be made to provide empirical proof to support the findings or to generalize them to apply to all teachers or classes.

1.3 Definition of terms

Before further discussion, it may be necessary to define some of the terms which will be used in the study.

According to Willis, "teaching English through English" means "speaking and using English in the classroom as often as you possibly can, for example, when organizing teaching activities or chatting to your students socially. In other words, it means establishing English as the main language of communication between your students and yourself" (1981:xiii). Thus, in this study, the use of language as "a means of instruction, a means of class organization, a means of communicating with the students as individuals who have a life of their own outside the classroom" (Willis 1981:vi) and even as a means of reprimanding students are all regarded as part of teaching. These are real situations that occur in the classroom which can be exploited for meaningful exposure to authentic language and for communciation.

The term "Chinese" will be used throughout the study to mean Cantonese when referring to the spoken language and Modern Standard Chinese when referring to the written language.

Form I is equivalent to grade seven in the North American system.

The remedial English class students referred to in this study are those who are identified as the weakest in English in Form I in their particular school irrespective of the standard in each individual school or the screening method employed by each school.

In this chapter, the problem, objectives and special terms are defined. In the next chapter, a literature review of the topic will be given.

Notes

1. English is taught as a foreign language rather than a second language because it is not used by non-native speakers outside the school even though it is an official language and a medium of instruction in Hong Kong Anglo-Chinese secondary schools. While Richards used the term "auxiliary language" to describe the unique status of English in Hong Kong (Richards and Luke 1981:16), R.Tongue observes that the situation is one of "English as a foreign language with English as a second language expectations" (Cheng 1981:118).

2. Children usually study for three years in kindergarten and six years in primary school. However, some parents choose not to send their children to kindergarten. Other children in addition to the normal three years in kindergarten, spend one extra year in nursery schools where simple English is also often taught. In a minority of kindergartens, no English is taught at all.

3. The mixture of English and Chinese can refer to the mixed code in which Chinese sentences are sprinkled with English terms. It may also refer to cases when teachers deliberately make clear switches between the two languages for a particular purpose.

4. The substance of the remarks have been confirmed by Mr. Cheng himself.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature related to the research questions presented in the previous chapter. The three research questions are:

(1) How is English or English and Chinese used in Form I remedial English classrooms?

(2) Why is English or English and Chinese chosen?

(3) What is the researcher's own perception of the value of each medium?

In this chapter, we shall first review the literature related to why and how English should be taught through English. This will be followed by a review of literature related to why and how English should be taught with some use of the students' first language. In both of these cases, the literature that will be looked at discusses the teaching of English as either a second or foreign language rather than as a first language. Finally, literature on diary studies as a research method for self-observation will be reviewed.

2.1 Arguments for teaching English through English

As there is a large body of literature on the teaching of English through the target language, it is impossible to discuss it all in this chapter. Thus, only those articles that specifically mentioned the language of instruction in English lessons will be included here.

2.1.1 Why English should be taught through English

Three main categories of arguments can be identified in the body of literature related to teaching English through English. Three categories are related to the following factors:

(1) Environmental factors

(2) Cognitive factors

(3) Affective factors

2.1.1.1 Environmental factors

A large body of literature underscores the importance of exposure to the target language in language acquisition. At present, it is commonly assumed that the main goal of learning a language is to communicate in that language (Willis 1981; Low 1981; Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982; Bower and Walters 1983). For Dulay, Burt and Krashen, a language environment favourable for natural communication is important for second language acquisition. They say:

> It also appears that the most beneficial language environment is one where language is used naturally for communication. While some aspects of language may need conscious study, the acquisition of the basics of a language is best accomplished in contexts where the learner is focused on understanding or expressing the idea, message or other thought in the new language. Concrete 'here and now' topics are essential for language acquisition (1982:3-4).

The student acquires the basis of a language best in an environment where the target language is used for reception and production.

In places where English is not used outside the classroom, the English classroom is the only place where the students are exposed to the target language (Low 1981:82). Thus, according to Low, teachers should not deprive the students of the opportunity to be exposed to English by using Chinese in English lessons (1981:82). Bolitho also agrees that for the same reason the students should "restrict themselves to the target language on the few occasions they are asked to do so" in the English classroom (1976:112). As Willis says, the English atmosphere in the classroom is thus important for English learning in a foreign language classroom.

> If you are teaching English overseas, learning English through English in your lesson, in a classroom with an English atmosphere, is for your students, the next best thing to going to Britain or an English speaking country and learning English there (Willis 1981:xv).

In the classroom, one important source of language input is teacher talk (Langi 1983:14-15) even though one of the teacher's aims should be to increase student talking time and decrease teacher talking time (Gower and Walters 1983: 25). Terrell and Krashen define teacher talk as follows:

> Teacher talk is foreiger talk in the second language classroom. It is the language of classroom management and explanation when it is in the target language (1983:35)[1].

Gower and Walters define teacher talk in terms of metalanguage:

> Metalanguage is the language you use in the classroom in order to explain things, give instructions, to praise or to correct -- in other

> words, all the language that isn't being 'taught'. Students, however, learn a lot from metalanguage because it is genuinely communicative language. That is one reason for trying to avoid using the students' mother tongue if possible. There is nothing artificial about a situation that involves you praising a student or asking another to be quiet. The context is clear and the language used within it serves a real purpose (1983:25).

Bolitho even goes one step further to suggest that every moment of exposure to the target language is useful:

> Every second spent speaking any but the target language may be deemed time lost. Even if target language explanations are sometimes long and tortuous, they have the undeniable advantage of being in the target language and the pupil is thus continuously exposed to a meaningful use of the target language (1976:112).

However, there may be a point at which "long and tortuous explanations" may not really result in meaningful use of the target language. Terrell and Krashen observe that exposure to the target language alone is not enough if the language being used is too far beyond the level of comprehension of the students. In other words, the teacher talk needs to consist of comprehensible input (1983:34-35).

To sum up, the above literature points out that since the English classroom is the main environment where students are exposed to the target language, teacher talk should be in comprehensible English as far as possible so that students can be continuously exposed to meaningful and communicative use of the language. Students should also be expected to restrict themselves to the target language when they are asked to do so in the classroom to ensure greater exposure to the language.

2.1.1.2 Cognitive factors

The second category of reasons found in the literature is related to the students' understanding of the target language. It is feared that the use of translation may adversely affect the students' understanding and use of the target language.

Wilkins says that translation does not really teach meaning:

> Translation is a useful device for providing an immediate interpretation of a new linguistic form. However, since the meaning of an item is the product of relations within the language in which it occurs, and since translation associates the item with a different language, it cannot be said in itself to teach meaning (1974:81).

Usually when translation is used to teach meaning, the learner will assume that the meaning of the word in the target language is the same as the meaning of the equivalent word in the first language. The foreign language form will easily become associated with the semantic system of the learner's mother tongue. This is dangerous because "the lexical representation even of common aspects of our everyday physical world varies from language to language" (Wilkins 1976:80-81). Low further points out the danger by saying that

> English words may vary greatly in meaning in different contexts and a single Chinese translation can rarely be applicable in all cases. Pupils will be confused and misled if they apply the translation method indiscriminately (1981:81-82).

Another problem is that some words cannot be properly translated into another language. Low gives an example using the Chinese and English languages:

> Structural words such as 'the', 'of', 'into', 'at' and 'with' can never be sensibly translated into Chinese and very often it may lead to incorrect English if pupils draw a false analogy between English and Chinese sentence structures (Low 1981:81-82).

Hammerly points out one more danger in the overuse of the native language. He says that the learners may develop the habit of translating every word or of thinking that the second language is only a class game. They may tend to think that whenever there are important things to say, they are said in the native language (1982:321). French says that translation recalls the language habits of the native language and is thus an obstacle to foreign language learning (1948:82). Similarly, Bower and Walters warn teachers that "translation is a dangerous habit for the students to be encouraged into": too much use of the mother tongue also inhibits students' speaking and finally thinking in English (1983:67). Low also attributes the students' inability to write natural and idiomatic English to their habit of thinking in their mother tongue first (1981:81). Bolitho further remarks that if the students are allowed to develop a habit of relying on their mother tongue, they will never "succeed in making the all important 'leap' into the culture of the target language and without this, they can never really master the language" (1976:113).

In short, the use of translation does not always help to explain meaning. It may lead to wrong analogies between the two language systems and may cause students to form bad habits of language learning and language use.

2.1.1.3 Affective factors

Billows is concerned about the detrimental effect of translation on the learning motivation of the students:

> If we give the meaning of a new word, either by translation into the home language or by an equivalent in the same language, as soon as we introduce it, we weaken the impression which the word makes on the mind. The pupils' curiosity is dissipated, the tension is relaxed before his interest even begins to be stretched.... It is wiser to let the word stand by itself without a stronger rival beside it; the curiosity to unravel the unknown, to solve the puzzle, to hunt the stranger, helps to concentrate an attention on the word intensely, so that it is easily remembered.... We spoil the game if we give the solution to a puzzle before it has been really worked at, before pupils have had a chance to try their wits and the quickness of their ears on it (Billows 1962:28).

Bolitho explains the problem further by saying that once the learning tension has gone, it is hard to retrieve. The students may mistakenly believe that they have learnt the item and may not care to do further practice work on the item. Problems may then be caused for the teacher who will have to correct the mistakes through remedial teaching (1976:111).

The students may also begin to rely on their mother tongue for comprehension. Bolitho says:

> If pupils realize that their teacher is willing to resort to mother-tongue explanations if the initial attempt in the target language fails they may (with some justification) ask themselves why they should bother to make the effort to understand in the target language in the first place (1976:112).

Furthermore, the students' motivation to actually communicate in the target language is affected. As Bolitho remarks, they may also lose the will to concentrate on communicating only in the target language.

On the other hand, if no mother tongue is used, Low thinks that pupils will soon find the attempt to communicate successfully in the target language very rewarding. The attempt also helps to build up their confidence in using the target language (1981:82).

Time may also be wasted in the teacher's trying to recapture the students' attention after it has wandered. Bolitho says:

> A teacher may have to work hard to succeed in building up the atmosphere of the target language in the classroom. What a fool he would then be to destroy this hard-won achievement by allowing the introduction of the mother tongue either by himself or by one of his pupils. It may take a considerable time to recapture the pupils' concentration. In any case, his destroying and rebuilding of an atmosphere will certainly waste rather than save time (1970:112).

Bolitho is also worried about the effect of the use of the mother tongue on the teacher's own mental state:

> The lazy teacher may like such a vague state of affairs, for he will also have the feeling that he can always rely on the mother tongue to help him out. This is sure to create sloppy attitudes in the classroom and pupils motivation will consequently suffer (Bolitho 1976:112).

To sum up, the above literature suggests that the use of the mother tongue to explain meaning may dampen the students' curiosity about the unknown and decrease their willingness to understand and communicate solely in the target language. Time may also be wasted over the weakening and rebuilding of the classroom atmosphere, and the teachers may also develop in themselves and in their students an unhealthy reliance on the use of the mother tongue.

2.1.2 How English should be taught through English

There is also a huge body of literature on how to teach English through English (e.g. Fries 1945; French 1948; Billows 1962; Bolitho 1976; Willis 1981; Gower and Walters 1983). Although it is beyond the scope of this literature review to deal with each source in detail, general suggestions will be summarized below. In this section, the review will be confined to literature related to the teaching of vocabulary and of language items which emerge in this study as key areas of discussion.

Before practical applications are looked at, it is pertinent first to be reminded of how learners acquire a language. Langi summarizes The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom by Terrell and Krashen (1983):

> Acquisition takes place only when comprehensible input is provided. Comprehensible input is indispensable for the activation of the acquisition process and the eventual internalization of the structures and grammar of the target language (1983:12).

Acquisition is further facilitated by giving students input that is a "little beyond their level of acquired competence" (Terrell and Krashen 1983:32). To enable the learners to comprehend new utterances, contexts (e.g. reading material) and extra-linguistic information (e.g. visual aids) should also be provided to the students (Langi 1983:12).

As for practical suggestions, Low feels that the pupils should be encouraged to build up a direct association between idea/objects and English words instead of going through the complicated process of translation (1981:82). Mackey also suggests a number of ways to teach English without the use of the mother tongue. He says that objects or models of the objects may be used to teach vocabulary (content words, abstract words, quality words) as well as structures and structural words: the "easier these objects can be seen and felt the easier it is to get the meaning across" (1965:242). Visual aids can also be used to help convey the meaning. Mackey suggests that there are three types of language teaching pictures:

(1) thematic pictures which are used to illustrate a theme or a text;

(2) mnemonic pictures which are designed to remind the learner of certain words or sentences; and

(3) semantic pictures whose only function is to get a specific meaning across (1965:246).

Any of these types of pictures may appear "in the text, in separate class pictures and on films" (Mackey 1965:246-248).

Besides visual aids, much can also be taught "through gestures, like pointing and touching and actions like giving and taking" (1965:243). Demonstrations are also useful (Willis 1981:2). Mackey further suggests that "some methods teach structural meaning by varying the situation together with the sentence" (1965:244). Once the learner has acquired a certain vocabulary, new words can be learned from verbal contexts. Terrell and Krashen explain the importance of providing contextualized teaching material:

> By hearing everything in a clear context, the student is able to follow the communication without necessarily understanding all of the language *per se*. When this goal is attained, students will believe they can understand a new language. This is an important psychological barrier which must be broken through if the students are to be successful in language acquisition (1983:75).

To avoid interference from the mother tongue, Wilkins suggests that the target language be presented in a context clearly different from that of the mother tongue. He says that the learners have a strong tendency to assume that the meaning of a word is the same as the equivalent word in the mother tongue.

> We can do our best to discourage it[the assumption] by presenting language in a general cultural context that is clearly different from that of the mother tongue and by establishing a set of visual associations for any item so rich that assumptions of interlingual synonymy will be difficult to sustain (1974:80-81).

How can words be learned from verbal contexts? Wilkins suggests using definitions, exemplifications and paraphrase to make the meaning clear (1974:81). Mackey suggests further that verbal contexts can include:

(1) definition (new words may be defined by words known);
(2) enumeration (a meaning may be taught by listing what it includes);
(3) substitution (substitute some words for other words or groups of words);
(4) metaphor (use the same word for words which have two or more common features);
(5) opposition (use the opposite of the word to show the meaning);
(6) multiple context (use context to help learners guess the meanings of the words)(1965:250-252).

To sum up, the above literature suggests that English can be taught through English with the help of objects, visual aids, gestures, actions, demonstrations, situations and verbal contexts.

However, it must be pointed out that the above literature only sums up the arguments for teaching English through English. Some of the authors cited also discuss arguments for teaching English with some use of the mother tongue and therefore do not themselves necessarily advocate a complete use of English in English lessons.

2.2 Arguments for using some first language of the students in English language lessons

2.2.1 Why the mother tongue is used in the English lesson

Hammerly (1982:310) cites a number of writers who have agreed that translation performs a useful role in second language teaching/learning. Among them are Politzer, Harty, Belasco, Rivers and Ney. Other writers have found the bilingual method of instruction more effective than a monolingual one. Among them are Mishima, Dodson, Lim, Sastri and Butzkamm (Hammerly 1982:319).

The reasons given in the literature review for using the mother tongue may be grouped into two categories. They are arguments related to:

(1) cognitive factors

(2) affective factors

2.2.1.1 Cognitive factors

A number of studies have indicated that monolingual techniques may lead to vague or wrong associations in the minds of the students. A summary of this view is given by Sweet:

> Rather than yielding precise semantization, then, monolingual techniques often establish vague and ambiguous associations and fuzzy concepts as compared with those that can be established via translation (cited in Hammerly 1982:307).

Very often, the teacher cannot know what associations with the new word the students have formed in their own minds and he cannot correct them immediately (Hammerly 1982:309). Even when pictures are used together with the monolingual technique, wrong associations may still be established because, as Pimsleur says,

> Even the clearest pictures tend to elicit a variety of utterances, rather than only the one we want (cited in Hammerly, 1982:307).

Hammerly explains that because a picture has no direct connection with a word or a sentence, it can be related to many words and sentences (1982:307). He also says that

> Visuals are subject to cultural differences, individual differences in ability to intepret the pictures, and technical difficulties in deciding how to represent each word or sentence (1982:308).

Wilkins says that the mother tongue is good in the initial teaching of meaning to avoid ambiguity (1976:82). Hammerly also believes that translation makes knowledge precise (1982:315) and it oan help to form immediate and accurate associations (Hammerly 1982:310). Furthermore, translation also "gives the learners reassurance and allows them to perform various essential cognitive operations" (Hammerly 1982:313-316).

Many writers suggest that translation is a time-saving technique (French 1948; Rivers 1964; Green 1970; Wilkins 1976; Willis 1981; and Hammerly 1982). Hammerly thinks that translation is "the surest, most direct, most economical, easiest and most precise way of conveying meaning" for it saves time for real communicative activities that follow the explanation (1982:314-315). How translation can save time is described by Green:

> Many words (abstract nouns are an obvious example) are difficult or time-consuming to present situationally, and even in carefully prepared texts the load of new vocabulary is often so heavy that, if we have to spend more than three or four minutes presenting each one, very little time will be left for practice. Where other presentation techniques seem likely to waste time or cause confusion, the most sensible solution is to give a vernacular explanation of approximate equivalent. A few

> It is a safe guide for the teacher to use any method which will make things easy for the children and which will give them a feeling of success and of being certain. The teacher will avoid at all times and by every means any possibility of giving his pupils a feeling of hopelessness, defeat and discouragement (1948:83).

To sum up, the above literature points out that the students resort to the mother tongue equivalents as their assurance of having learned an item. The use of the mother tongue also helps to give the students a sense of success, which is favourable for language learning.

2.2.2 How the mother tongue should be used

The literature reviewed in this section will be presented in terms of when the mother tongue should be used, what functions should be performed in the mother tongue and how each function should be performed in the native language.

2.2.2.1 When the mother tongue should be used

A majority of the writers who argue for the use of translation advocate only an occasional and judicious use of the mother tongue (French 1948; Rivers 1968; Green 1970; Taylor 1972; Wilkins 1974; Low 1981; Willis 1981; Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982; Hammerly 1982; Gower and Walters 1983). Butzkamm calls this kind of translation "enlightened monolingualism". He defines it as "the systematic, purposeful and strictly controlled introduction of the native language within a monolingual methodology" (cited by Hammerly 1981:322). In short, the amount of native language used is planned and under control.

Bolitho cites that "Green and Taylor recommended an 'occasional' judicious use of the mother tongue in the classroom, putting the onus on the teacher to decide when and how to use it" (1976:119). However, Bolitho observes that it is difficult especially for the younger and less experienced teachers to judge when and how to use the mother tongue (1976:110).

Dulay, Burt and Krashen suggest that "no reference need be made to the students' first language unless the student requests it" (1982:269). Taylor thinks that the mother tongue should be used only when "communication breaks down" (1972:57).

Hammerly suggests that the native language should be used mainly in the presentation of material, but not in practice activities. As for the question of when the native language and the second language should be used, he says:

> The second language can only slowly and gradually become the language of instruction. This gradual development starts with the native language as the foundation and eventually reaches the point where there is understanding and production without translation. In other words, we learn the second language through the native language, for we reason and conceptualize subvocally in the language in which we have conscious awareness, and that, at the beginning and for a long time, is the native language; only after considerable exposure to the second language does it become possible to do either of these things in the second language (1982:321).

Hammerly goes so far as to suggest that at the beginning level the native language should be used for no more than 20% of the time. By the late intermediate level, it should be used for no more than 8 to 10% of the time. At the advanced level, no more than 5% of the class time should be spent in using the mother tongue, and then only to present and consolidate new lexical items. At the advanced level, no discussion should be carried out in the native language though it would still be used in glossing new lexical items in readings (1982:322).

In short, even though some writers think that the mother tongue can be used when the teacher or the students feel there is a need for it, Hammerly suggests that it should not be used readily whenever someone wants it to be used. It should only be used readily at the beginning of the programme and then only for specific purposes, sparingly for other purposes, and not at all for many activities (1982:323).

2.2.2.2 Functions performed in the mother tongue

Hammerly suggests some functions which can be performed in the mother tongue.

(1) to introduce the program;
(2) to teach pronunciation;
(3) to teach grammar;
(4) to ascertain whether the students are paying attention to the meaning of what the teachers are saying;
(5) to answer questions or clarify matters whenever the students seem "lost";
(6) to give early cultural comments;
(7) to give directions for any new activity or technique, in

the classroom or the laboratory;

(8) to simulate conversation on tape;

(9) in early listening comprehension activities to allow the students to show what they have understood;

(10) in reading material, to provide glosses of words;

(11) to give test instructions;

(12) to give homework assignments;

(13) to announce anything that would not be understood in the second language (1982:323).

Guthrie reports his study of the interaction and language use of two teachers of a group of Chinese-American first graders in English reading and oral classes. The Chinese teacher used Chinese for the following distinct purposes:

(1) for translation of words students appeared not to know;

(2) as a "we-code", "a language which indicated group membership and personal connections";

(3) for procedure and directions;

(4) for clarification;

(5) for checking for understanding (1984:45).

In Legarreta's study on language choice in Spanish bilingual classrooms, she found that English, the mother tongue, was the usual choice for warning, for accepting the children's contribution, for directing and for correcting the children (1977:9). While Legarreta's study refers to modern language classrooms in general rather than to EFL classrooms specifically, discussion of language choice is still relevant for this study.

To sum up the functions mentioned by Hammerly, Guthrie and Legarreta, the mother tongue can be used for teaching vocabulary, language items and pronunciation, for giving instructions or announcements, for testing, for clarification or for giving personal feedback and comments.

2.2.2.3 How each function should be performed in the mother tongue

The literature reviewed below only deals with three main functions which are usually performed in the mother tongue and which emerge in this study as key areas of discussion:

(1) the teaching of vocabulary,
(2) the explanation of language items and
(3) the giving of instructions.

2.2.2.3.1 The teaching of vocabulary

French summarizes the principles guiding the use of the mother tongue in teaching vocabulary:

> When teaching words, use English speech, objects, pictures, actions and every possible means of making the direct connection between idea and word. Use translation only after all these methods have been used...... If you do have to translate, get it over quickly and get back into English (1948:84).

Low suggests that it may be necessary to explain in junior forms certain abstract content words (1981:82). However, like Hammerly, she emphasizes that the words explained in the mother tongue must be used immediately many times in suitable target language contexts to make sure that the students have the correct usage of the word (Low 1981:82; Hammerly 1982:312). Willis suggests that many examples should be given in English so that students can practise using the word and will therefore remember it (1981:xiii).

2.2.2.3.2 The teaching of language structures

As regards the teaching of language items, Hammerly suggests that translation should be "translation of ideas, not of words" (1982:320). It should be used to cue concepts, so that there will be no detrimental effect on the language learning (1982:317). French thinks that the mother tongue should only be used to explain grammar (1984:82), and he shares Hammerly's opinion that it is unwise to translate for sentence and phrase patterns. Occasionally, the native language can be used to show the difference or similiarity between the patterns in the two language systems (French 1948:82; Hammerly 1982:317-318). Dulay, Burt and Krashen, however, warn teachers against contrasting the first and second language when explaining grammatical structures and against translation tasks as a major technique (1982:169).

2.2.2.3.3 The giving of instructions

Low suggests that some native language may be used to help Form I students to settle down in a new environment at the beginning of the first school term. But she emphasizes that after the students have become familiar with the simple language of classroom management, the whole lesson should be conducted in the target language again (1981:82). Willis thinks that it may be quicker to explain the aims of the lessons in the native language to make sure the students know what they are supposed to learn. However, instructions should normally be given in English though a vernacular explanation may be needed the first time. After that, there is no excuse according to Willis, for conducting classroom business in English (1970:221).

To sum up, the above literature suggests that although the mother tongue may be used to explain vocabulary or language items or to give instructions, it should only be used at the initial stage for explanation purposes and it should be emphasized that an immediate shift into the target language is required after the vernacular explanation.

It appears that most of the literature related to teaching a foreign or second language through the target language only or with some use of the students' mother tongue are discussions of theoretical concepts or practical suggestions on why and how a certain language should be used for teaching English. Thus far, few research studies report on a researcher trying to implement these theories or suggestions in the classroom. Nor are there many empirial studies which can substantiate these theoretical basis. As far as the teaching of English through English and through English and Chinese is concerned, Guthries' study (1984) on contrasts in teacher's language use in a Chinese-English bilingual classroom comes closest to the topic which is discussed here. However, it only deals with reading in English with a bilingual teacher and oral language with an English speaking teacher. The students are Chinese-American first-graders. The only relevant findings are those related to the functions in which the bilingual teacher perform in Chinese. Thus far, no studies have been done on the language choice in English language classrooms in the Hong Kong setting. This study is a first attempt to investigate this area and a diary study was designed to serve this purpose.

2.3 The diary study as a research method for the teacher's self-observation and insight

2.3.1 Importance of the teacher's self observation and insights into language learning

Christison and Bassano bring out the importance of teacher self-observation in a paper entitled "Becoming the best teacher you can be through self-observation" (1983). They regard effective teacher evaluation procedures as a top priority and believe that teachers can best evaluate themselves and their own performance. An effective way to do this is to observe and describe the teachers' own classroom attitude or practice (1984:17).

Jersild asserts the importance of the teacher's understanding himself by saying:

> A teacher cannot make much headway in understanding others or in helping others to understand themselves unless he is endeavouring to understand himself (cited in Telatnik 1977:2-3).

Telatnik expands this idea by saying:

> It becomes not only desirable but also crucial for the teacher to recognize the source of his own needs, fears, desires, anxieties and hostile impulses. Without this self-awareness, he will continue to view and judge others through his own biases and distortions in spite of his academic and professional training (1977:3).

Once the teachers are aware of themselves, they usually change their behaviour (Brophy and Good 1974; cited in Telatnik 1977:3). When they are honest with themselves, they will be able to deal with the feelings of others.

Gower and Walters suggest that one way for teachers to implement self observation is to keep a personal diary of their class time so as to develop better awareness generally as a teacher (1983:6). Holt agrees that his journal is a record of his own growth and also a source of advice for other teachers who have the same doubts and problems (Telatnik 1977:8).

2.3.2 The diary study as a research method for self observation

Ochsner suggests that there are two research traditions, namely nomothetic and hermeneutic. He writes that "Nomothetic means the scientific attitude of lawfulness and of 'causal' relations" (1979:67). It works best when it is applied to simple facts. The experimental design is an example of a research method belonging to this tradition (1979:71).

Ochsner continues, "Hermeneutics means the art of interpretation" (1979:67).

> [Through this type of study, we can interpret] what second language acquisition (SLA) means to us, and what we think it means to others. What we can do, what we do already, is to debate the SLA text, argue why one interpretation outdoes another. In our profession, this debate enriches our understanding of SLA and ourselves more so if we look variously, if we apply many methods of inquiry and not a single nomothetic view (1979:63).

Diary studies belong to the hermeneutic research tradition. They have their theoretical foundations in ethnomethodology: they are a kind of ethnographic study in an educational setting (Burnett, cited in Long 1980:23).

In ethnographic research.in education, one practice is for an observer to enter the classroom with few preconceived ideas to observe classroom events and to take notes. The observer can then ask the participant about his perception of what happened. Long further explains that such research gives "insights available to an investigator who (1) suspends judgement until after the data have been collected, and (2) is prepared to allow participants' orientations to their actions to guide his or her own" (1979:23). The basic purpose of such research is to generate a new hypothesis (Bailey and Ochsner 1983:188) rather than to test a particular hypothesis (Long 1980:22).

The difference between diary studies and other techniques in ethnography is that the diarists' main object of study is themselves. Introspection supplements observation as a data-gathering device (Long 1980:23).

In second language learning, Bailey and Ochsner give the following definition of a diary study:

> A diary study in second language learning, acquisition, or teaching is an account of a second language experience as recorded in a first person journal. The diarist may be a language teacher or a language learner but the central characteristic of the diary studies is that they are introspective: the diarist studies his own teaching or learning. Thus he can report on affective factors, language learning strategies and his own perceptions—facets of the language learning experience which are normally hidden or largely inaccessible to an external observer (1983:189).

Most of the existing diary studies are of the learning of a second language. Early work using the diary-keeping technique as a language learning research tool was done by Francine and John Schumann while learning Arabic in Tunisia and Persian in Iran and California (Bailey 1983:71). Their data were eventually analysed with the main emphasis on individual learning characteristics. Rivers also kept a diary of her Spanish learning experiences (1983:169), which gave valuable insights into second language learning. In Bailey's diary research on her own study of French (1980), in addition to observing herself, she also focuses attention on the behaviour of her classmates and the teacher (Long 1980:23). She gives further insights into factors affecting second language learning.

Thus far, few diary studies have been done by teachers. In 1963, a teacher's diary was written by Ashton - Warner to record the implementation of a "method of teaching that can make people naturally and spontaneously peaceable" (1963). This has become a classic and was eventually made into a film (1963). However, this diary does not specifically focus on language teaching but on a more general educational philosophy. A teacher's diary has also been written by Telatnik to illustrate the importance of "the intensive journal as a self-evaluative instrument for the ESL teacher".

Thus far, diary studies have only functioned in the following ways as listed by Bailey and Ochsner:

(1) as a research tool

(2) as a source of research findings

(3) as a process of self-evaluation

(4) as a language learning technique

(5) as a means of working out the diarists' frustrations with the language learning (or teaching) experience(1983:193).

The functions and value of diary studies have so far not gone beyond the limits of the language learning or overall teaching process itself.

This present study is in fact a first attempt to examine through a diary study a specific issue (language choice) as related to the language teaching process. The area to be investigated is the language used in two Hong Kong Form I remedial English classrooms. Chapter 3 deals with the preliminary study designed to investigate this topic.

Note

1. However, foreigner talk also implies some modifications to try to insure comprehension by the non-native listener.

CHAPTER 3

THE PRELIMINARY STUDY

This chapter is a brief summary of the objectives, research method and the results of the preliminary study, out of which grew the main study.

3.1 Objectives

In view of the problems of language choice which Form I remedial English teachers face in their EFL classrooms, this needs-assessment study was designed to elicit information about the following areas :

(1) The present situation of language choice in Form I remedial English classrooms;

(2) the functions for which teachers frequently use Chinese; and

(3) the reasons for using Chinese and/or English in the lessons.

3.2 Method

A questionnaire was sent to Form I remedial English teachers in twenty-eight Hong Kong secondary schools inviting their responses to the questions regarding the above areas. The teachers in all but one school returned the questionnaire. Seventy questionnaires were sent out and sixty-eight were returned.

3.2.1 Sample

The types of schools chosen and information about the teachers are given below.

3.2.1.1 Schools

A convenient sample of schools was selected on the basis of their districts and types (see Appendix 1, Table 1.1). The twenty-seven schools were selected from different areas in the three districts of Hong Kong: four were situated on Hong Kong Island, fourteen in Kowloon and nine in the New Territories.

The sample also represented various types of secondary schools that have remedial English teaching.

(1) It consisted of twenty-three Anglo-Chinese schools and four Chinese-Middle schools.

(2) Twenty-five of the schools were grammar schools. One was a technical school and the other a prevocational school.

(3) Only government and aided schools in which remedial English teaching was compulsory were selected. No private schools were included because of the unlikelihood of remedial English teaching in those schools.

(4) Since information about the English standard of the Primary VI students was not available in the Education Department, no attempt was made to categorize the schools according to their English standard. However, the schools most commonly recognized to be highly prestigious were not included in the sample. This was because the

English standard of the students in their remedial English classes might be much higher than that of the students in other schools. Still, the English standard of the students in the selected schools also might vary. However, all the students in the Form I remedial English classes were presumably the weakest in English in their respective schools.

(5) It could be assumed that a majority of the students in the selected schools came from primary schools in which Chinese was used as the medium of instruction. Most primary schools in which English is used as the medium of instruction have their own affiliated secondary schools. Since a minority of secondary schools belong to this type, only one of these secondary schools was selected for this preliminary study.

3.2.1.2 Teachers

The teachers were chosen on the basis of their willingness to cooperate with their principals to whom the questionnaires had been sent. The teachers' educational background varied but it could be assumed that they were mostly experienced English teachers because the Education Department expects the schools to appoint experienced teachers to teach remedial English. Data collected from the questionnaires confirmed that most of the teachers were experienced ones. Table 1.2 in Appendix 1 shows that 50.8% of the teachers had more than five years of experience in teaching English. A majority of them (70.3%) had taught remedial English for one to two years. Since remedial English teaching was only started in 1982, they were possibly the most experienced remedial English teachers. Most of them were trained teachers (66.2%), and a majority were university graduates (56.9%). However, only 47.7% of them had been English majors or minors and thus their proficiency in English probably varied.

3.2.2 Procedures

Four Form I remedial English teachers were first invited to try out the questionnaire. As no revisions were needed, copies were then sent out to the principals of the selected schools either by hand or by mail. The 68 teacher responses were collected from the schools within four weeks after the questionnaire had been sent out.

3.2.3 Content of the questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of three main parts (see Appendix 2).

Part I : Questions 1 to 8 dealt with how Chinese was used in Form I remedial English classes in terms of the frequency and amount of Chinese used and the frequency of specific functions for which Chinese was used.

Part II : Questions 9 to 23 were devoted to the teacher's perceptions of their reasons for using Chinese and English.

Part III : Questions 24 to 27 asked for information about the teacher's qualifications.

In Part I, the teachers reported what they actually did in their English lessons. In Part II, the teachers indicated their perceptions of the reasons for their language choice. Part III was simply a record of background information. In short, the questionnaire elicited self-reported data on what the teachers did and felt regarding language choice in Form I remedial English lessons.

3.2.4 Data analysis

The responses to questions 1 to 23 were coded on a five point scale. The responses were assigned values of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 for options A, B, C, D and E respectively. The mean and standard deviation of responses to each question were calculated to find the general tendency of choice. For example, in question 9, the teachers were asked about their perceptions of the reasons for using Chinese in Form I remedial classes.

The reason : I need to use Chinese because the English standard of my students is so low that they cannot understand English.

No. of responses from teachers :

A. Strongly agree = 19
B. Agree = 31
C. Neutral = 5
D. Disagree = 9
E. Strongly disagree = 0

Mean value = 3.94

Standard Deviation = 0.97

For questions 1 and 3 to 23, only rough descriptors (e.g. occasionally and seldom) indicating progression on a continuum were used. It was felt that since the teachers were all non-native speakers, they might tend to interpret the meaning of the isolated descriptors in different ways. On the basis of experience, it was felt that the English teachers would instinctively make their choices according to the position of the descriptors on the continuum rather than on very subtle semantic distinctions between, for example, "occasionally" and "seldom".

As for questions 24 to 27, the percentage of each response was calculated to show the general distribution of the teachers' qualifications. For example, in question 25, the teachers were asked the number of years they had taught Form I English remedial classes. The options given were :

A. less than 1 year B. 1 to 2 years

No. of responses : A = 19 B = 45

Percentage : A = 29.7% B = 70.3%

3.3 Results

The results were examined in terms of how and why Chinese or English was used. The detailed information about responses to each question are given in Appendix 3 and 4.

3.3.1 How Chinese or English is used

How Chinese or English is used in Form I remedial English classrooms was considered in terms of the *frequency* and *amount* of Chinese used and the *frequency* of specific functions performed in Chinese.

For the *frequency* of Chinese used in remedial English lessons, a mean value of 3.53 was obtained, indicating that the teachers tended to use Chinese rather often (see Appendix 3, Table 3.1)[1].

As for the amount of English and Chinese used in the English lessons, 4.5% of the teachers reported using English only and 47.8% of the teachers reported using more English than Chinese during English lessons (see Appendix 3, Table 3.2). It is commonly believed that English only should be used as far as possible in all English lessons by all teachers. However, 34.3% of the teachers reported using half Chinese and half English and 13.4% reported using more Chinese than English during their English lessons. The data seems to indicate that quite a large number of teachers are using more Chinese than expected in English lessons.

The following table gives a general profile of the frequency of specific functions for which Chinese was used in the English lessons. More detailed information about the data can be seen in Appendix 3, Table 3.3.

Table 1 Comparison of frequency of specific functions for which Chinese was used

Question No.	Specific functions performed in Chinese	No. of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation
3	To explain vocabulary	65	3.63	0.88
4	To explain language rules or items	65	3.63	0.89
5	To give instructions	64	2.97	0.85
6	To explain class activity	65	3.51	0.79
7	To give school or class announcements	65	3.89	0.89
8	To scold students	65	4.00	0.95
(Always = 5, very often = 4, occasionally = 3, seldom = 2, never = 1)				

As can be seen in Table 1, teachers used Chinese most frequently for reprimanding students (mean=4.00) and giving school or class announcements (mean=3.89). The next two functions most frequently performed in Chinese were to explain vocabulary (mean=3.63) and language rules or items (mean=3.63).

The four most frequent functions are mentioned here instead of only two because some teachers might not regard the first two (reprimanding students and giving announcements) as part of English language teaching at all but simply as classroom management procedures which help to regulate students' general classroom behaviour. Thus, the teachers might feel free to use Chinese abundantly in these areas. To some of the teachers perhaps only explaining vocabulary and language rules or items were part of the actual language teaching process because such instruction helps to modify the students' language behaviour. The individual teacher's interpretation of the questionnaire would depend on that teacher's basic beliefs about what constitutes English teaching. However, it could be deduced that the general purpose for using Chinese was to help the students understand better because clear understanding is expected of the students in all of these four function areas.

3.3.2 Why Chinese or English was used

The teachers' perceptions of the reasons for choosing Chinese or English are given below. The following table reports the reasons for using Chinese. More detailed information concerning the percentage of responses for each reason can be found in Appendix 4, Table 4.1.

Table 2 Reasons for using Chinese

Question No.	Reasons	No. of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation
9	Low English standard of students	64	3.94	0.97
10	Time-saving	64	3.02	1.11
11	Avoid misunderstanding	64	3.73	0.74
12	Students more ready to respond and participate	63	3.38	0.94
13	Chinese is used in all other lessons	64	2.50	0.98

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Question No.	Reasons	No. of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation
14	Students' repeated request	64	2.63	0.95
15	The teacher expresses himself/herself better in Chinese	65	2.34	0.87
16	The teachers' ethnicity	65	2.29	1.00
(Strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, neutral = 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1)				

The above data seem to indicate that the teachers choose to use Chinese mainly because they feel that the English standard of the students is low (mean=3.94) and they wish to make sure that the students do not misunderstand what they say (mean=3.73).

The following table shows the teachers' perceptions of why English is used in English lessons. More detailed data can be found in Appendix 4, Table 4.2.

Table 3 Reasons for using English

Question No.	Reasons	No. of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation
17	Greater exposure to English	65	4.15	0.67
18	Acquire English in a natural'way	64	3.92	0.63
19	Challenging and fun to work out what the teacher says	65	3.40	0.88

Question No.	Reasons	No. of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation
20	Prevent students from forming habit of relying on Chinese	65	3.68	0.73
21	Students expect English in English lessons	65	3.29	0.88
22	School policy to use English	64	3.27	0.90
23	Teachers express themselves better in English	65	2.97	0.80
(Strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, neutral = 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1)				

For most teachers, the main reason for using English is to expose the students to as much English as possible so that they can learn better (mean=4.15). Most of the teachers also tend to think that by teaching English through English, the students will learn English in a natural way, thus acquiring more natural and fluent English (mean=3.92).

To sum up the results, several findings can be reported.

(1) It seems that many Form I remedial English teachers in the sample used a lot more Chinese than expected in their English lessons.

(2) The specific functions for which Chinese was reported to be most frequently used were to reprimand students, to give announcements and to explain vocabulary and language rules.

(3) The teachers reported using Chinese mainly because the English standard of the students was low and they wished

to make sure the students understood exactly what they meant.

(4) The teachers reported using English mainly because they wished to expose the students to more English so that they could acquire the language in a natural way.

3.4 Questions for consideration

Comparing the data, the mean for reasons for using English is generally higher than that for Chinese. It thus appears that, in theory, the teachers think that they should use English rather than Chinese in English lessons. However, in practice, they tend to use a greater amount of Chinese than expected. Are the practical difficulties (such as the low standard of the students) really so great that it is essential for the teachers to use so much Chinese? Is there a possibility that the teachers are over-using Chinese now?

The data indicates that teachers tend to use Chinese more frequently for certain functions. Why is the use of Chinese so necessary in those areas? Are there no other methods by which the teachers can perform the same functions? Is the use of Chinese the only workable way of performing those functions?

Is there a possibility that there are more personal reasons underlying the teachers' language choice besides those mentioned in the questionnaire? Might those underlying reasons be the more immediate and compelling reasons leading to a seeming overuse of Chinese?

When the questionnaire was first coded and analysed and these questions first arose, it seemed that further research needed to be done to obtain more insights into the above-mentioned problems. It was for this purpose that a diary study was designed and carried out to throw more light on the "hidden" areas (Bailey and Oschner 1983:189) which are inaccessible to the questionnaire. Some of the results of this preliminary study will also be brought into the discussion of the results of the main study (see Chapter 4).

Notes

1. This question was interpreted with "occasionally" being taken as the mid-point on the scale. However, some teachers might have interpreted the word "occasionally" as slightly less than 50% frequency. It was felt that teachers would tend more to make their choices according to the position of the descriptors on the continuum rather than on very subtle semantic distinctions between each isolated descriptor.

CHAPTER 4

THE MAIN STUDY

This chapter describes a diary study of my teaching[1] two groups of Form I remedial English students through English and through English and Chinese respectively. The procedures and results of the study are reported.

4.1 Objective

To find out more about what happens to the teacher and students when a certain medium is used in the English lesson and to explore the hidden areas as regards language choice, which could not be reached by the questionnaire or were normally "inaccessible to an external observer" (Bailey and Ochsner 1983:189), I kept a four month daily record of my own teaching in two Form I remedial English groups. In one group (Group A), I only used English as the medium of instruction. In the other group (Group B), some Chinese was used. I made a record of the activities and major events related to the language of instruction and also of my feelings and attitudes towards the language I used in each group.

4.2 Procedure

I based my diary study on the methodological framework proposed by Bailey and Ochsner (1983:189) in their methodological review of diary studies. According to Bailey and Ochsner, the process of a second language teaching diary study involves five main activities:

(1) The diarist should give an account of his personal language teaching history.

(2) The diarist should systematically record events, details and feelings about the current language teaching experience in his diary.

(3) The diarist should revise the journal entries for the public version of the diary. In this revision process, names are changed, information damaging to others or embarrassing to the diarist is omitted and meaning is clarified.

(4) The diarist should study the journal entries looking for patterns, significant events and questions.

(5) Information identified as important to the teaching experience should be interpreted and discussed in the finished diary study (1983:189-190).

I have followed all five procedures, and each activity will be described below.

4.2.1 Background information about my language teaching and the students

I am a non-native speaker of English. I was taught English through English only when I was in secondary school and university. I have had twelve years' experience in teaching English as a foreign language in Hong Kong Anglo-Chinese secondary schools. I have been the Department Head of the English Subject in an Anglo-Chinese secondary school in the New Territories for five years. In these five years, following the advice given by the Education Department, I advised the English teachers on my panel to use English only during English lessons. Throughout my teaching career before this study, I had never used a single Chinese word during my English classes. I had a firm conviction that only English should be used in English lessons and I had no problem at all in using English as the medium of instruction. I have taught all forms of students and classes with different academic standards. However, prior to starting the diary study, I had not taught any remedial English classes.

The remedial class students in the two groups were the forty-four who were screened to be the weakest in English in Form I in my school. The screening was done by means of a Form I English proficiency test designed by the British Council in Hong Kong (1982). These forty-four students were split into two groups of twenty-two. The students in Group A received remedial language teaching both in the English subject and in the Chinese subject while the students in Group B were only weak in the English subject and therefore received remedial teaching only in the English subject. Students from both groups all came from nearby Chinese medium primary schools. They were probably used to being taught English with the help of Chinese.

I used the same textbooks, supplementary teaching materials and teaching method for each group. Since the communicative appproach is now advocated in Hong Kong (Cheng 1981:133), the coursebook the school chose for the Form I students was oriented towards the communicative approach. The students also used a supplementary grammar exercise book as a textbook. I, like many other teachers, based my teaching material mainly on the textbooks. Because I was required to follow a teaching schedule prepared by the form co-ordinator, I had to follow the basic focus of the course, which was to teach language structures. Reading, writing, listening and oral activities were also integrated into the course. Methodologically, I basically adopted an eclectic approach in teaching, which means a combination of different methods rather than an adherence to any one method (Strevens 1978:192).

The only controllable difference between the teaching of the two groups lay in the language of instruction I used in each group. In Group A, I only used English. In Group B, I used some Chinese. I still used English mainly in this group but switched to Chinese whenever I thought it necessary.

4.2.2 The diary keeping process

I kept my diary of teaching the two groups of students for a four month period in autumn 1984 on a total of 108 lessons for each group. The period fell in the first term of the school year.

Every day, each group had one to two English lessons and by the end of the six day cycle[2] they had had the same number of lessons. During each lesson, I took brief notes on the places where I had used Chinese and on important events that were related to the language of instruction. All my lessons were taped as a record of what happened in each class. I only referred to the tapes when I wanted to cross-check certain points when I wrote my diary[3]. Every night, I wrote my diary entry for the day and expanded on what happened in each lesson during the day. This was based on the notes that I had jotted down during class (my own introspection) and on retrospection. I wrote my diary in the same place and at the same time each day. It took me an hour or more to write my diary entry each night, depending on how many lessons I had had during the day.

In the diary, I recorded the major activities planned for the lesson, what was actually done in the class, major student reactions and events related to the language of instruction. I also recorded my own feelings and perceptions as regards the language I used in each group. I deliberately kept the entries in a systematic way to facilitate analysis at a later stage. A sample can be seen in Appendix 5.1 & 5.2.

Each night, I finished writing the entry for the lessons in one group first before I dealt with the other group. By doing this, my reactions to one group would not be affected by those of the other. After I had written the diary for the day, I put it away and did not read it again. I wanted my perceptions and reactions each day to be as free as possible from influences from preceding entries.

4.2.3 Revision of the journal entries

At the end of the four months, I read the diary entries for the first time. Then, I revised the sections of the diary that I planned to quote in this study. I did not leave out any information because I thought even the most embarrassing moments I had recorded could help to give insights into the problem of language of instruction. A sample diary page can be found in Appendix 5.3 & 5.4. Names have been changed and meaning has been clarified in certain places.

4.2.4 A search for patterns

Next I read through the diary again to look for patterns and significant events related to the main objectives of the study. After that, following Bailey and Ochsner's suggestion, I formulated the following questions to look at.

(1) What does the diary tell me about how I used or did not use Chinese?

    In what areas and for what functions did I use Chinese in Group B?
    How frequently did I use Chinese to perform each function?

    How did I manage to teach in Group A without code-switching on those occasions?

(2) What does the diary tell me about why I chose to use Chinese?

    What were the surface and underlying reasons for my code-switching on those occasions in group B?

(3) What does the diary tell me about my feelings and attitude towards the language used in each group?

I read through the diary again to focus on areas related to the above questions. Specific details relating to the questions or their answers were plotted on charts. The charts were divided by months to facilitate interpretation. Then, following Bailey and Ochsners' suggestion (1983:195), I made frequency counts of the items plotted on the charts. Rough patterns then began to emerge.

4.2.5 Interpretation of diary entries

Using the patterns drawn from the entries, I will first analyse the findings in each group separately and then compare also the findings. Relevant findings from the preliminary study were brought into the discussion wherever appropriate. Implications for language choice and teacher training were defined and suggestions for future research were formulated.

4.3 Results

The results were analysed in light of the questions I formulated as I searched for patterns in the diary entries. The questions were mainly how I had or had not used Chinese, why I used Chinese and my feelings and attitude towards the language used in each group.

4.3.1 How I used Chinese

4.3.1.1 Functions performed in Chinese in Group B

When I started out using some Chinese in Group B, I held to the principle that I would use Chinese only when I felt there was a need. After going through my diary entries, I found that I had performed five functions in Chinese: namely, to explain vocabulary, to give instructions, to explain language rules, to talk to individual students and to discipline the students.

The vocabulary that I explained in Chinese were of four categories:

(1) names of objects, food, occupations, places and school subjects;

(2) words showing events;

(3) words denoting actions;

(4) words carrying abstract meanings.

The actual words can be seen in Table 6.1 of Appendix 6. The first category of words mentioned above were the most frequently explained in Chinese.

As regards instructions, I used Chinese to give three types of instructions:

(1) giving instructions for class activities (for example, how certain games, projects or exercises should be carried out);

(2) giving rules for classroom behaviour;

(3) giving assignments.

Instructions for class activities were most frequently given. The details can be seen in Table 6.2 of Appendix 6.

I also used Chinese to explain language rules, mainly language items which could easily be confused with each other (See Table 6.3 of Appendix 6).

I also tended to use Chinese when I talked to individual students who were very weak in English. I either gave them instructions in Chinese, asked them for information, explained things to them or answered their questions in Chinese.

I also used Chinese to reprimand the students when they were getting very noisy or did not seem to be listening to me.

4.3.1.2 Frequency of using Chinese for these functions

When the number of periods in which the five functions occurred were counted and the months in which they occurred were checked[4], certain patterns emerged as shown in the Table 4 below.

Table 4 The frequency of occurence of functions performed in Chinese

Functions	No. of periods in which Chinese was used to perform the function				Total no. of periods
	1st month	2nd month	3rd month	4th month	
Explaining vocabulary	3	8	13	6	30/108
Giving instructions	3	8	7	4	22/108
Explaining language rules	1	4	1	0	6/108
Talking to individual students	0	4	6	3	13/108
Reprimanding students	4	1	0	0	5/108

The distribution is also shown in the form of a graph in Appendix 7.

In the table, the relative frequency of use of Chinese for each function and the frequency of using Chinese for each function in each month can be seen.

Firstly, as regards the relative frequency of use of Chinese for each function, I used Chinese most frequently in explaining vocabulary (30 periods), followed by giving instructions (22 periods), talking to individual students (13 periods) explaining language rules (6 periods) and reprimanding students (5 periods).

Secondly, as regards the distribution of Chinese used for each function within each month, the following observations can be made:

(1) I used Chinese to explain vocabulary throughout the term, especially in the third month.

(2) I also used Chinese to give instructions throughout the term, especially in the second and third months.

(3) I used Chinese mainly to explain language rules in the second month. Very little Chinese was used for this purpose in other months and none at all in the last month even though language rules were taught in every month.

(4) I did not talk to any student individually in Chinese in the first month, but I used Chinese for this purpose in the other months.

(5) I only needed to reprimand students in Chinese in the first month. No further Chinese was used for this purpose except once in the second month.

To sum up, it seems that in different parts of the term Chinese was used for different purposes. I used Chinese to explain vocabulary and give instructions throughout the term. Once I started talking to individual students, I kept on using Chinese for this purpose till the end of the term. As for the other two functions, explaining language rules and reprimanding students, it seems that once the students had become used to my way of dealing with these matters in English, no more Chinese was needed for these purposes.

However, did I really need to use Chinese for these functions on all the occasions in which I did? How did I manage to teach without saying a word in Chinese in Group A?

4.3.1.3 How I managed to teach without Chinese in Group A

Firstly, as regards vocabulary, I taught both groups the same amount of vocabulary though Group B took the initiative to ask me to explain more vocabulary than I intended to teach. I managed to get across the meaning of most words to the students in Group A except for the few words listed in Table B.2 of Appendix B. Table 5 below shows the methods that I used to replace my own use of Chinese in successfully explaining different types of vocabulary (see also Table B.1 of Appendix B for details).

Table 5 How I explained vocabulary without my using Chinese

Category no.	Categories of vocabulary	Methods of explanation
1	Names of objects (e.g. glue)	-showing the object or a sample -using gestures -drawing pictures -giving descriptions -giving examples -students shouting out Chinese translations
	Names of food (e.g. hamburger)	-showing pictures (sometimes with Chinese characters on them) -students shouting out Chinese equivalent
	Names of roles/ occupations (e.g. manager)	-giving examples of the job they did -drawing charts to show relationships -students shouting out the Chinese equivalent
	Names of school subjects (e.g. geography)	-giving examples of the content of the subject
2	Words showing events (e.g. sunset)	-description of what happens on those occasions
3	Words showing actions (e.g. scream)	-demonstrating or describing the action

It can be seen that most vocabulary can be explained with the help of visual aids, demonstrations and giving examples or descriptions. One common occurence that was noted in my diary for both groups was that whenever I gave a vocabulary item, students tended to shout out the Chinese equivalent of the word. They usually continued to give many other alternatives until I confirmed the meaning of it by nodding my head or saying "Yes" in English. This indirectly helped those students who did not get the meaning of the word to learn what the word meant.

However, my diary entries also indicate that I failed to explain several categories of vocabulary even though the above-mentioned methods were employed. They were mainly names of objects that the students had never seen before or could not even recognise from the picture, names of places that they could not identify on a map and words having abstract meaning. Details about these situations can be seen in Table B.2 of Appendix B.

Secondly, when giving instruction, I managed to function without the use of Chinese even though help from other sources was necessary to get the idea across. The methods used are shown in Table 6 below. Details can be seen in Table B.3 of Appendix B.

Table 6 How I gave instructions without using Chinese

Category no.	Categories of instructions	Methods of giving instructions
1	Instructions for class activities	-drawing examples or samples on the blackboard -repetition of explanation -using gestures -going round the class to give individual help -teacher demonstration or teacher and student demonstration -changing the instruction to simplify the procedure
2	Instructions for classroom discipline	-explanation and checking of students' response
3	Instructions for assignments	-asking the students to write down the assignment in their Assignment Book to take home for parents to sign. The parents may help to explain the assignment to them.

My diary entries indicate that the students in Group A could follow the instructions for activities and classroom discipline very well. They did what was asked immediately. They sometimes had problems with the instructions for assignments. I found it difficult to make them fully understand what I wanted them to do. However, I would ask them to write down their assignments in their assignment book. Perhaps in a few cases, they might have had help from their parents or other students in understanding the assignment. Sometimes they needed to learn through trial and error, but they finally did their assignments as required. Usually, once they had got used to the general format, they found little problem over understanding assignments afterward.

Thirdly, as regards the explanation of language rules, the diary entries show that the students in Group A seemed to be happy about the way I explained language rules. They often nodded their heads to show they understood what I meant. The main method that I employed in place of the use of Chinese was to write out examples of a pattern in two columns and underline the differences between the patterns with coloured chalk. Many examples also had to be given and exercises had to be done to make sure the students understood what I had been explaining. Details of the methods can be seen in Table B.4 of Appendix B.

However, there were occasions when I found that I had to use Chinese in Group A, though these occasions were rare. My diary entries indicate that there were six occasions on which I spoke to individual students in Chinese either when they came to see me individually at the teacher's desk or outside the classroom.

Unlike in Group B, I never used Chinese to reprimand the students in Group A because they were on the whole very well behaved. On the few occasions on which I needed to reprimand them, I used English only.

To sum up, out of the five functions for which I used Chinese in Group B, I managed to perform most of the same functions successfully in Group A without my own use of Chinese. This seems to indicate that I only really felt the need to use Chinese when I explained certain vocabulary and talked to individual students. I am uncertain whether or not the use of Chinese would have been necessary for discipling

Group A or not if they also had discipline problems like those in Group B. However, the analysis of the diary entries for the two groups appears to suggest that on many occasions in Group B, I did not really need to use Chinese to perform certain functions such as in explaining a large number of vocabulary items, in giving instructions and in explaining language rules. Why then did I use so much Chinese for so many different functions in Group B? In the following section is an analyses of the reasons for my use of Chinese in Group B.

4.3.2 Why I used Chinese

For Group B, I can identify in my diary entries two categories of reasons for code-switching into Chinese. The first category is related to occasions on which I thought there was a need on the part of the students that called for my use of Chinese. The second category of reasons is related to my own desire to use Chinese. I have identified five student-initiated reasons and three teacher-initiated reasons.

4.3.2.1 Student-initiated reasons

The five student-initiated reasons are:

(1) I found that the students did not understand me or did not know something.

(2) The students responded positively to the use of Chinese.

(3) The students lacked discipline.

(4) Individual students needed the help of Chinese.

(5) There was not enough time left in the teaching period.

4.3.2.1.1 Students did not understand

It occurred 38 times in my diary that I code-switched because the students did not understand me.

In many cases, the students showed by facial expression, gesture or verbal expression that they did not understand me. An excerpt from my diary in the second month says:

> When I explained how the possessives should be used, Tai Shan shouted, "I don't understand," so I explained in Chinese. He nodded vigorously. Then I explained the usage of "'s" in "students' books" and the difference between "students'" and "workmen's" in English. The whole class was silent. They stared blankly at me, so I explained the rules again in Chinese. Suddenly, they said almost in chorus in Chinese, "I see". Many students nodded (Diary:78).

Sometimes I used Chinese when I found that some students could not follow what I said. A diary excerpt in the third month gives an example of this:

> I asked the students to cross out Exercise C. They did not understand what I meant, so I showed them how to do it by crossing out one of the words on the blackboard. Some students understood and followed the instruction. Some still looked at me blankly, so I gave the instructions again in Chinese. Then everyone crossed out the exercise (Diary:108).

There were occasions when I explained certain things several times in English but the students still did not understand. In the second month, I wrote in my diary:

> When I put the word E.P.A. on the blackboard, Frank shouted out in English, "What is it?" I tried to explain the term in English giving examples about the content of the subject. They still looked puzzled. Thus I switched into Chinese. Suddenly, they got the idea (Diary:56).

Often, it was the students who requested me to speak in Chinese. An example from the diary entries in the second month illustrates the point:

> I asked the students to underline the sentences beginning with "There is..." and "There are...". They did not understand what "underline" meant. Someone shouted loudly in English "Say in Chinese! Say in Chinese!" Thus I gave the instruction in Chinese (Diary:56).

Sometimes, I code-switched because the students appeared not to know something or had misunderstood something. This occurred frequently when students shouted out Chinese translations. This appeared 8 times in my diary. In a diary entry in the second month, I wrote:

> When I asked the students, "What is a manager?" Someone said "董事"(´duŋ´si). I felt I should correct him. So I said "經理"(ĝiŋ ˏlei) (Diary:88).

Another diary excerpt in the fourth month says:

> When we did an exercise on prepositions together, the students shouted out the Chinese equivalent of each preposition. This carried on for quite some time when we suddenly came to the word "over". The students got stuck and stopped giving out the translation. Maybe they did not understand what it meant, so I quickly gave them the Chinese equivalent. Then they went on with the translation activity (Diary:172).

4.3.2.1.2 Students responded positively

Another reason why I used Chinese was that the students responded very positively to the use of Chinese, especially in translating vocabulary. They were very excited about the guessing and translating game.

I recorded in the second month of the diary:

> The students were excited to find out what the Chinese term was and they were happy when they suddenly realized what these words meant (Diary:88).

Such positive reactions occurred 11 times in my diary. The students in fact regarded the Chinese equivalents as very important. They did not feel assured or satisfied until they could drag out from me the Chinese term or a confirmation of their translation of the English term. They valued the Chinese equivalents to the extent that as soon as they heard the Chinese equivalents, they immediately wrote them next to the English words in the book. They liked the translation method very much.

4.3.2.1.3 Students lacked discipline

The third reason for using Chinese was that the students lacked discipline. How I needed to use Chinese to reprimand the students was recorded for the first time in the second week of my diary:

> The whole class was restless. Tai Shan kept shouting in Chinese and caused a lot of trouble. The other students were chatting loudly to each other. I was angry at the whole class. I shouted to the top of my voice. They didn't seem to hear me or understand me. They simply ignored me. They talked loudly and moved around.... At last, I had to shout at them in Cantonese! The noise suddenly stopped. They stared at me in surprise. They did not expect me to speak Chinese. Anyway, I got their attention again. Thus, they were kept under control (Diary:12).

It seems that code-switching was an effective way to discipline the students especially at the beginning of the term when the teacher and the students did not know each other very well. At least the sudden change in language helped to bring the students' attention back to the teacher. Also the students could not excuse themselves by saying that they did not understand what the teacher meant.

4.3.2.1.4 Individual students needed help

The fourth reason for code-switching was that two problem students in Group B needed special individual help. One was very weak in English and did not understand a word I said. He never handed in his homework. He did not bring his books to class and no matter what I said to him, he looked at me blankly, so I had to use Chinese to speak to him. He responded when I spoke Chinese to him. My diary of the second month says:

> Siu Ming lost his workbook,' but he didn't tell me. When I found it out and asked him for an explanation, he looked as if he didn't understand me. He kept talking to me in Chinese. Thus I explained what he should do in Chinese. Strangely, he answered me in English (Diary:80).

After that, whenever I talked to him, I spoke in Chinese. Another student always caused disciplinary problems. He never listened to a word I said. Every lesson, he kept shouting repeatedly sometimes in English and sometimes in Chinese, "I don't understand! I don't understand! Say in Chinese! Say in Chinese!"

In a diary excerpt in the third month I write:

> Tai Shan talked nonsense in Chinese throughout the lesson. He was not listening to what I said at all. I asked him to repeat what I had just said. He pretended he did not understand me, so I scolded him in Chinese (Diary:140).

It seemed that for these two students who needed special attention, I needed to use Chinese which was a familiar language that they were more ready to accept. For other students, even when I talked to them individually, I spoke in English.

4.3.2.1.5 There was not enough time

The fifth reason for code-switching was that it saved time. When I was running out of time, the use of Chinese was a convenient way to deal with a number of things in a short period of time or to solve a problem quickly. I describ one occasion in my diary.

> I asked the students to bring a family photo to the next class. They did not seem to understand what I meant. The bell was going to ring and I was getting nervous. To save time, I switched immediately into Chinese (Diary:58).

My problem was solved.

4.3.2.2 Teacher-initiated reasons

In the above section, I have discussed the reasons related to the actual reactions of the students which seemed to call for the teacher's use of Chinese.

However, there were occasions on which I deliberately chose to use Chinese myself even though the students did not indicate that they wished me to use Chinese at those times. I call these teacher-initiated reasons.

There were three main teacher-initiated reasons:

(1) The teacher enjoyed using Chinese.
(2) The teacher was worried.
(3) The teacher considered the use of Chinese to be expedient.

The first reason why I chose Chinese was that I enjoyed using it because I was eager to see the students' excitement over the translation game. I chose to use it deliberately for what I considered "the good of the students". The following diary entries illlustrate my feeling:

> I felt quite free and at ease when I used Chinese because I felt I was doing something that was good for the students and I could be sure that they really had understood me (Diary:86).

> I enjoyed seeing the moment when the students were guessing the Chinese equivalents eagerly. I felt happy to see that they were so motivated to learn and I had a sense of achievement because I was sure they could remember those names better with the Chinese equivalents written in their books (Diary:94).

I enjoyed using Chinese. It gave me a sense of achievement. Thus I deliberately chose to use it whenever there was a chance to do so.

The second reason was my own worry or concern. My diary entries indicated that I tended to be worried over two problems. The first one was that the students did not understand me. The second one was that the students were getting out of control. I had a tendency to be oversensitive about these two problems. I was often so nervous that I switched into Chinese before the situation became a real problem[5] . Two excerpts from my diary illustrate my feeling.

> I explained the difference between the use of "fish" and "fishes" in Chinese not because the students showed they didn't understand. Some students had in fact nodded to show they understood. I felt that the concept was difficult to understand. I was afraid some students might not have understood. Thus I explained in Chinese (Diary:52).

On another occasion, I wrote:

> When I had announced that they were going to play a game, they immediately became very excited. They at once felt relaxed and began to shout and talk to each other in Chinese. I felt that the discipline was going to get out of control. I did not even attempt to explain the rules of the game in English. I switched to Chinese right away. I shouted out the

> rules loudly in Chinese hoping that they would keep quiet and listen to me. However once I had started to use Chinese to give the instruction, I had to go on using Chinese. I felt very guilty. I thought I had overused Chinese (Diary:36).

I thought I had used Chinese too readily. I might have got along with English but I was too quick to switch due to oversensitivity. On these occasions, the use of Chinese was simply my own choice. I might not really have needed to use Chinese.

The third reason why I chose to use Chinese was that on some occasions, I found that the use of Chinese was an "easy-way-out" when I did not feel like making an effort to teach.

In the last two months, I had relied so much on Chinese that I began to use Chinese without sound pedagogical reasons. I used Chinese simply because I did not want to make any effort to teach in English. It was simply too convenient to use Chinese. The following excerpts illustrate my feelings. In the second month, I wrote:

> I should have repeated the instruction once more in English before I switched to Chinese but I was too lazy to make such an effort, so I used Chinese (Diary:60).

In the third month, the same feeling appeared in my diary.

> I could have tried harder to explain again in English. I was sure they could understand eventually. However, since it was so convenient to use Chinese, why should I bother to make so much effort to explain in English? (Diary:118).

By the end of the last month, I remarked:

> The students were relying less and less on Chinese because their comprehension ability had increased. However, I felt that I was relying more on Chinese. I thought I had slacked off and had formed a lazy habit of teaching (Diary:206).

Among the reasons, there are several that I have identified as legitimate reasons for using Chinese:

(1) It helps the students to understand exactly what is taught.

(2) It motivates the students to learn and the teacher to teach.

(3) It helps to discipline students.

(4) It is needed when giving individual help.

(5) It is a time-saving device.

However, two reasons seem inappropriate. They are my over sensitivity and anxiety about certain situations in the classroom and desire to find an easy-way-out.

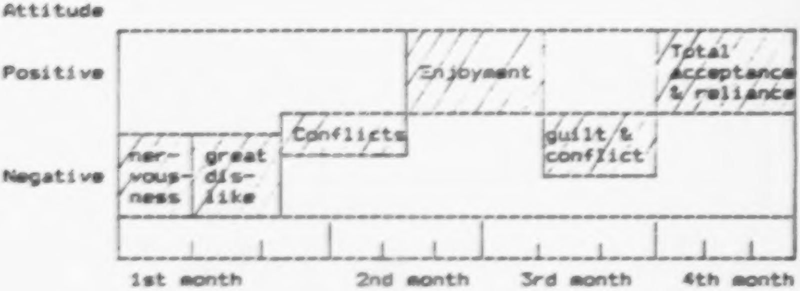
4.3.3 My feelings and attitudes towards the languages used in both groups

The analysis of my diary entries shows patterns of change in my attitude towards the language used in each group. The patterns seen in each group's entries will be analysed first and then a comparison of them will be made.

4.3.3.1 My change of attitudes towards the use of Chinese in Group B

In Group B where some Chinese was used, I could see when I analysed my entries a gradual change in my attitude towards the language during the four months. Following Bailey's example (1980:63) a figure was drawn to show the pattern of change as shown in Figure 1 below. In referring to the degree of preference towards the language used, the terms "positive" and "negative" are based on my subjective judgement. The labels and blocks do not represent any attempt to quantify the qualitative impressions and the shaded areas represent my dominant feelings at that time. These are relative labels based on my own interpretation and evaluation of my own feelings. They are not clearcut quantifiable distinctions.

Figure 1 My change of attitude towards using Chinese in Group B



When I started keeping the diary, I had a strong conviction that only English should be used in English lessons. I had never used any Chinese in my English lessons before. When I decided to use Chinese whenever necessary in Group B, I was extremely nervous. The diary entries during the first ten days of the term showed that I was nervous for one or more of these reasons:

(1) I was not sure when I should switch into Chinese.

(2) I was afraid that other teachers passing by my classroom would hear the Chinese I was speaking. As the Head of the English Department, I always advised my teachers to use

English in English lessons and I was afraid they would accuse me of not doing myself what I told them to do[6].

(3) I was beginning to have disciplinary problems with the students.

During the second ten days of the first month, I began to put the blame for the disciplinary problems of the students on the use of Chinese. One of my diary excerpts says:

> I am very frustrated because this class is beyond control. Is it because I have used Chinese that they now refuse to listen to my English? I hate to switch to Chinese. It may lead the students to think that I am not proficient enough in English to conduct the whole lesson and solve discipline problems in English. They may thus look down on me and do all sorts of disrespectful things in class. But now that I have started using Chinese in this group, do I need to use Chinese to control them? I feel ashamed and depressed. All along, I have been reputed to be a teacher who has never had class disciplinary problems. I also believe I can manage all kinds of classes. Why is it that now I am so helpless in front of this class? Is the language of instruction to blame (Diary:18)?

Another excerpt says:

> I dislike using Chinese. I shouldn't have let the students form a habit of relying on my Chinese. Now that I have used Chinese, they refuse to listen to anything I say in English. They only listen to things said in Chinese (Diary:28).

I also blamed the research project because if it had not been for the research, I would have used other methods such as knocking on the blackboard or staring at the students to replace the use of Chinese. Disciplinary problems might not have arisen if I had been using only English.

There was a change in my attitude starting from the end of the first month. The change started one day when I used

Chinese to reprimand the students while they were making a lot of noise. The use of Chinese proved to be very effective in controlling the students. I began to see the practical value of using Chinese.

I also began to see the use of Chinese as a convenient way to avoid the frustrations caused by class unruliness. An excerpt at the end of September shows my attitude:

> I found it very hard to explain in English what I wished them to do because they were not attentive. I repeated myself many times in English. I indeed looked like a fool because they were not listening. I found it a great relief when some students requested me to use Chinese. It saved effort and energy. I also felt happy when I saw that they understood clearly after the translation (Diary:34).

However, I also experienced conflicts and frustrations because I was not sure if I had overused Chinese. A diary excerpt at the end of the first month says:

> I feel quite at ease when I give explanations in Chinese. However, I also feel guilty after I have done so because I think I have used too much Chinese (Diary:36).

The conflicts and frustrations continued until the middle of the second month.

Starting from the middle of the second month until the first third of the third month, I began to enjoy the use of Chinese. The following diary excerpts show my feelings.

> I felt quite relieved when I entered the classroom because I knew I could resort to Chinese if they indicated they didn't understand (Diary:60).
>
> I didn't feel guilty any more. Instead, much satisfaction was gained when I saw that they looked happy because they understood me (Diary:63).
>
> I was glad to be able to use Chinese freely to correct their wrong translations (Diary:78).

> I begin to feel that the lessons in which I have used more Chinese seem to be richer and more beneficial to the students. I begin to like using Chinese more and more (Diary:106).

However, in the last twenty days of the third month, I again experienced a period of frustration and conflict. I felt I was losing control over the amount of Chinese used and I was trying very hard to regain control. On the other hand, I felt what I was doing was right. A diary excerpt says:

> Almost the whole of the second half of the lesson was teacher and student interaction in Chinese. It's too much! However, if the students are motivated to learn and can get what I mean, why not use Chinese (Diary:122)?

The frustrations ended in the last month. During the whole of the last month, the diary entries show that I had accepted the use of Chinese and was convinced about the value of it. I wrote in my diary:

> I think that the Chinese used in the ETV programmes really helped the students to understand well and to become more motivated to learn. It's strange that last year, when I previewed these programmes, I strongly objected to the use of Chinese in them. But now, I like them and am grateful to the producer who put Chinese into the programme. It helps me a lot in the explanation of some difficult terms (Diary:138).

In another place, I wrote:

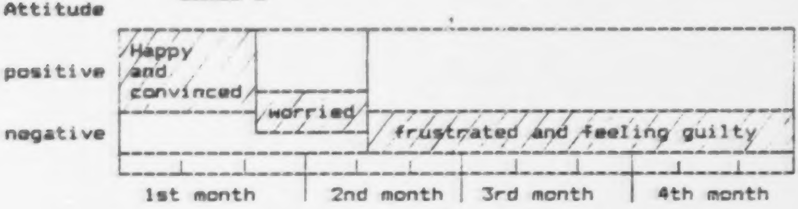
> I enjoy using Chinese. Now it seems that its my own decision to use Chinese rather than the students request for it (Diary:166).

To sum up, my attitude towards the use Chinese changed from one of dislike and resistance to liking and accepting it. I valued its use and deliberately chose to use it at the end of the term.

4.3.3.2 My change of attitude towards the use of English in Group A

Figure 2 shows the pattern of change in my attitude towards the use of English in Group A.

Figure 2 My change of attitude towards using English in Group A



For the first twenty days of the first month, when I started teaching Group A, I felt convinced that only English should be used in the English lessons. I was happy about the good behaviour and response of the class. My diary entry reflects this feeling:

> I feel quite at ease with this class. They are so quiet and co-operative. I am proud of the fact that they can understand my English. I need not use Chinese (Diary:11)!

However at the end of the first month, I began to feel that something was going wrong. There were occasions when the students showed they were uncertain about what I said. They began to be less responsive except when we played games or did manipulative grammar exercises. They dared not use English freely for communicative purposes. Two of my diary entries say:

> I am a bit worried. I wonder if they have understood what was taught (Diary:19)?

> Why didn't they bother to ask me anything? Is it because they dare not speak to me in English? Or is it because they think that even if they ask me, they

> still will not understand my English explanation? Is it simply the personality of the class that they do not like to talk (Diary:55)?

By the middle of the second month, I began to feel a sense of frustration. I began to see the value of and the need for using Chinese but I regretted that I could not use it. The following diary entries illustrate my feelings.

> I was glad that Chinese words were printed on the picture cards. This helped me save time and energy to make them understand (Diary:117).

> When I came to the names of countries, I found them very difficult to explain without using Chinese. They said they didn't understand! But at that moment, I couldn't think of a method to explain other than using Chinese. But I shouldn't use Chinese because of the experiment. I felt guilty and frustrated. I hadn't helped them to understand what they should (Diary:85).

> I felt guilty because I couldn't give what was best to them (Diary:113).

In the last month, I could feel the students' desire for my use of Chinese. I also felt strongly a need to use Chinese.

I wrote in my diary:

> I feel my hands are tied because I cannot use Chinese. How I wish the experiment would be over soon so that I can use Chinese with this group. I may need to re-teach certain parts in Chinese next term (Diary:148).

To sum up, my attitude towards the use of English changed from one of conviction to doubt about its effect on students. I began to feel an increasing inclination to use Chinese.

My change of attitude towards the languages used in both groups appears to suggest that there is value in using Chinese in English lessons. I finally felt at ease with the language which I started out feeling uncomfortable with[7].

These results will be interpreted and discussed in the next chapter.

Notes

1. Following Bailey and Ochsner's suggestion, the first person is used to shorten author distance (1983:193-194).

2. In some Hong Kong secondary schools, the six-day cycle system is used although teaching only takes place from Monday to Friday. This means that, for example, Day 1 of a cycle might be a Monday which would make Day 6 the following Monday. The next day (Tuesday) would then be Day 1 of the next cycle.

3. Since the taping started during the first lesson and the students were all Form I newcomers, they did not suspect that research was going on. They appeared to think that the taping was one of the classroom routine activities. Thus, there was probably no Hawthorne effect. As for myself, I was not nervous about the taping because I knew that the tapes would only be used for checking purposes.

4. I chose to count the number of periods in which Chinese was used for certain functions instead of the number of items in which Chinese was used. This was because I felt there might be a tendency that once Chinese had been used in a lesson, I would feel inclined to continue to use Chinese in the rest of the lesson. Especially when explaining vocabulary, I might end up with a large number of vocabulary items and this might outweigh the number of grammmar rules that I explained in Chinese. Besides, the amount of Chinese needed for each function was different. I might only need to say a few words to explain a vocabulary item but I might have to use a large chunk of Chinese in order to give certain instructions clearly. It was also practically impossible to count the frequency of the occurance of Chinese in 108 lessons for each group without transcribing the tapes (which would be beyond the scope of this study). Thus, counting class periods seems a fair way to determine the frequency of the occurrence of Chinese.

5. The same worry might exist in Group A also. However, the way I dealt with it was different. This part would be dealt with in 4.3.3.2 and chapter 5.

6. I had not told my teachers about the experiment because I was afraid the news might be leaked out to the students and there might be Hawthorne effect.

7. My attitude towards one group may inevitably affect that towards the other group. However, the general consistency of the patterns which emerged also shows a consistent change of attitude in myself.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the results of the main study will be discussed. The answers to the original questions formulated for the diary study have been given in Chapter 4. To repeat, the questions were:

(1) What does the diary tell me about how 1[1] used or did not use Chinese?

(2) What does the diary tell me about why I chose to use Chinese?

(3) What does the diary tell me about my feelings and attitudes towards the language used in each group?

In order to examine the implications of the answers to these questions, three additional questions with a slightly different focus also need to be asked:

(1) What advantages have I perceived in the use of Chinese in English lessons?

(2) Why is there a tendency to overuse Chinese?

(3) How can the misuse of Chinese be prevented?

These three new questions will be discussed primarily in terms of the results of the main study. Results from the questionnaire will be brought in whenever appropriate.

5.1 What advantages I have perceived in the use of Chinese in English lessons

The analysis of my reasons for code-switching seems to suggest that there may be some advantages in using Chinese in my English lessons. These advantages are:

(1) it helps students to understand;

(2) it motivates students to learn;

(3) it helps maintain discipline;

(4) it helps to give individual help to students;

(5) it saves time;

(6) it helps students acquire general knowledge.

Findings related to each advantage will be discussed below.

5.1.1 Helping students to understand[2]

My diary records the fact that students sometimes translated words wrongly even after I had tried hard to explain them in English. This confirmed Hammerly's concern that inaccurate associations might be formed in the students' minds if a monolingual technique is used to convey meaning (1982:301).

My experience with my two groups of students appears to show that the wrong associations can be discovered by the teacher through the mother-tongue equivalents that the students volunteer. It seems that if the students are not allowed to speak in their mother tongue at all in class, the teacher may be deprived of one way to detect and thus correct the wrong associations formed in the minds of the students.

My students' tendency to give translations whenever an English word was given to them supports French's view (1984:81) and Palmer's observation (cited in Hammerly

1982:312) that despite the teacher's effort to eliminate the native language, we cannot prevent the students from forming bilingual associations in their minds. They return to the equivalent in their native language as the final confirmation in their search for understanding.

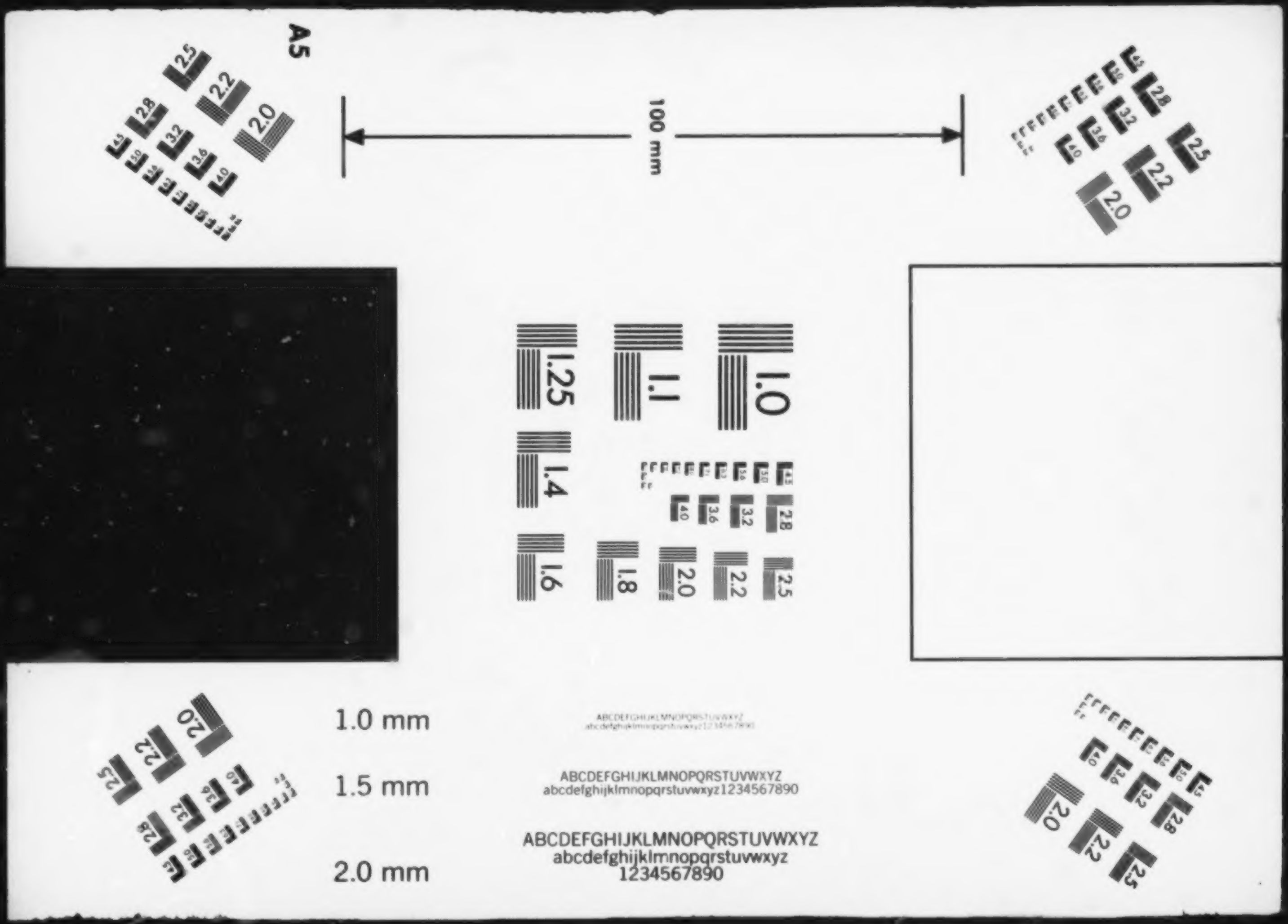
One reason why my students relied so much on the Chinese equivalents might be that they appeared to be uncertain about whether they had understood me correctly or not. They seemed to think that the use of Chinese could help them to acquire precise knowledge and confirm whether they had understood correctly or not. Some educators may argue that if a clear context is given, the students need not understand "all of the language _per se_" to be able to follow the communication (Langi 1983:12). However, the students' eagerness to guess or request the teacher to give the Chinese equivalents seems to suggest that, at least on the part of these students, understanding something precisely is very important. They seem to feel that they have not really learned something unless they understand it fully. They also appear to feel that the use of Chinese is a useful way to help them understand precisely. In other words, the reactions of the students seem to suggest that the use of mother tongue is an effective way of ensuring comprehension (Hammerly 1982:320) because it makes knowledge more precise (Hammerly 1982:315).

However, it must be noted that while the use of the mother tongue may help the students to understand correctly what is taught, it may also lead to dangers. From my experience with Group B, I found that once I had begun to use Chinese, the students began to rely more and more on my Chinese and refused to attempt to understand explanations given in the target language. Gradually, they began to overuse Chinese. My experience with Group A was the same. At first, I insisted that the students should all speak in English. I simply ignored whatever they said in Chinese. During that period, they could not rely on Chinese. They tried very hard to figure out what I said in English and finally they showed they understood by ffacial expression and nodding. This seemed to cast doubt on Hammerly's belief that listening to roundabout monolingual explanation is listening without understanding for this did not seem to be the case with Group A. After listening to roundabout monolingual explanations, the students eventually understood what was said. It seemed that the students had managed to cope with input which was a little beyond their level of acquired competence (Terrell and Krashen 1983:32). However, in the final two months of the study, after I had seen the advantages of using Chinese and began to acknowledge in English that the Chinese translations they gave were correct, the class began to search for Chinese equivalents whenever a word was given to them. They began to supply translations more frequently in Chinese and sought my confirmation of the accuracy of their translation. I could feel that during that period, they began to form a habit of translating each word and also a habit of thinking and speaking in Chinese. A comparison of the reactions in both groups seems to point to the fact that while the use of the mother tongue may help the students to understand the lesson more precisely, an uncontrolled use of the mother tongue may also lead to a habit of relying on Chinese translations. This confirms the fear of Bolitho (1976:112) and Hammerly (1982:321) about the students' forming a habit of reliance on their mother tongue.

However, how necessary is it for the students to understand fully every part of the lesson in order to learn a language well still needs further investigation. The effect of using Chinese on the students' language learning process and the language system learned also needs further empirical investigation. Low suggests that this reliance on Chinese is an obstacle to the writing of natural and idiomatic English (1981:81). Whether this is true or not needs empirical investigation as well. What may also be important to consider may be the dividing line between when the use of the mother tongue is beneficial to language learning and when the use of it will be detrimental to the language learning process.

5.1.2 Motivating students to learn[2]

The excitement of the students in both Group A and Group B over guessing the Chinese equivalents of the English terms appears to contradict Billow's 'learning tension theory' (Bolitho 1976). In this theory Billows suggests that


A5
100 mm
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students would be more motivated to learn if the tension of guessing the unknown through solving a puzzle given in the target language is not weakened by translation (1962:28). However, the students' reaction in my groups seemed to be more in line with French's observation that students are only happy and satisfied when they have searched for the correct equivalent in their own language. This gives them a feeling of success (1948:82). Students are more motivated to learn if there is a sense of achievement. For my two groups of students, the sense of achievement was gained more from the use of Chinese than from the use of English only. French seems right in saying that teachers should avoid as much as possible giving their students "a feeling of hopelessness, defeat and discouragement" through endless and unassured guessing (1948:83). The use of Chinese in this study gave the students a chance to learn with excitement and to gain a sense of achievement as shown in their eagerness to volunteer and guess the Chinese equivalents of English words. Perhaps in a foreign language learning setting this feeling of achievement may be especially important to the students because they lack the opportunity for target language communication outside of the class: the situation might differ in a second language learning environment.

It must be noted, however, that both students and teachers may, as Bolitho remarks, become so pleased about the students' success in guessing words in Chinese that they are less willing to communicate only in the target language

(1976:112). The two groups of students did exhibit the tendency to communicate first in their mother tongue and then switch to the target language. The switch occured when the teacher requested it or when they themselves suddenly remembered they were supposed to speak in English in English lessons. My students also appeared to have the feeling that once the Chinese equivalent was found, the game seemed to be over. After that they were not so interested in doing further practice work on the item. From their reactions I could see that if the guessing game was encouraged too far, the students would form an unhealthy attitude towards the use of the target language.

The question that needs to be considered is: how far should the students be allowed to translate so that, on the one hand, their motivation to learn can be maintained and, on the other hand, no unhealthy attitude are formed towards the use of the target language.

5.1.3 Helping maintain discipline

According to my diary, using Chinese to discipline students in Group B seemed to be an efficient means of bringing the class back to order. As reported in the analysis of the questionnaire study, the teachers most frequently used Chinese to scold students. Thus both the diary and questionnaire results seem to confirm the perceived effectiveness of using the mother tongue as a disciplinary tool. The effectiveness might partially be a result of the fact that when the mother tongue is used, the students have no excuse for not understanding what the teacher has said. They realize that a deliberate breaking of an order which the teacher knows they understand will certainly invite strong punishment. Thus, the students usually decide to obey the teacher's orders. Another reason why the mother tongue is effective may be that the students feel a closeness and directness in the mother tongue, and they are more inclined to respond than if the language they hear is foreign. However, there is a counterargument that sometimes it is better to use a foreign language to reprimand students so as not to break the close relationship which exists in the mother tongue between the teacher and the students. Whether scolding can also be done more successfully through the foreign language or not still needs further study. Since Group A was very well behaved, I did not gain any counterevidence from that experience. However, it must also be noted that even in Group B, scolding only needed to be done in Chinese in the first month of the term when the students began to talk to each other too loudly. In the remaining months, the class was kept under control in other ways (for example calling the name of the student who was causing trouble, deducting marks or just by staring silently at the student). Perhaps this evidence confirms the advice from the syllabus that a little Chinese may need to be used at the beginning of the term to help the students settle down (H.K. Government 1983:6).

5.1.4 Giving individual help to students[2]

In my diary I recorded the fact that when students came up to my desk to ask me questions, they tended to speak in Chinese first. If I answered them in English, they looked shy and embarrassed. This might be an indication that they expected me to speak Chinese to them. Weak students especially refused too respond if I did not speak Chinese to them. Thus, I am reasonably certain that the use of Chinese in some circumstances helps weak students. The mother tongue, a mark of solidarity, helps to break the barrier between the teacher and the student. The student is more ready to open up to express his problems. The answer given by the teacher in the mother tongue also helps the student to understand more easily. Especially when I wished to deal with individual problems quickly so as not to waste class time, the use Chinese was a very effective way to get the problems solved.

5.1.5 Saving time

It has been suggested that the use of the mother tongue has the advantage of saving time (Hammerly 1982:314; Low 1981:81). Examples from the diary entries show that on some occasions before the bell rang or when visual aids such as pictures had not worked successfully, the use of Chinese did help to save a little time. This is short-term time-saving. That is, the mother tongue helps to save time at certain critical moments.

There is also the question of long-term time-saving. For example, some teachers may feel that there is a more constant need to use Chinese in order to finish teaching a syllabus within a certain time period[3]. However, in my study, when the teaching progress of the two groups is compared, it seems that Group A was not any slower than Group B. It might seem that the use of the mother tongue had not significantly helped me to speed up the finishing of the syllabus. However, it must be noted that the pace of my lessons might have been affected by other factors such as the personality and atmosphere of each class. Group A was passive and Group B was very active. Time had to be spent keeping order in the Group B classroom and in answering the students' questions. Therefore, it is very difficult to attribute the saving of time to the use of Chinese alone.

One more question that needs to be considered is: even if the use of Chinese really helps to save time, what long-term effect will the use of Chinese have on the language learned by the students? Occasional use of the mother tongue in order to save time may not be very detrimental. However, if Chinese is constantly used in order to achieve the long-term goal of finishing the syllabus, the more frequent exposure to the mother tongue may be counterproductive for the students' target language learning. What price do the students have to pay? Can the good and the bad effects be balanced out? It is thus difficult at present to conclude whether or not the using of Chinese is a worthwhile time-saving tool until further research has been done.

5.1.6 Gaining general knowledge

Besides the advantages listed above, another advantage which I discovered during the four months changed my firm conviction about using English only in English lessons and changed my initially negative attitude towards the use of Chinese. This advantage is related to students' acquiring general knowledge . In the last two months of the study, I recorded many times in my diary that I thought it was good for the students to recognize the Chinese equivalents of the English names of the streets in Hong Kong[4] and of the countries of the world[5] . This helped the students to remember such proper nouns better. Recognising the Chinese equivalents is useful for the building up of their basic general knowledge[6] .

To sum up, findings in my study appear to suggest that there are some advantages in the use of Chinese. On the other hand, some findings in my study also suggest that there may be the danger that the advantages will be outweighed if Chinese is overused.

Since there seems to be some advantages in using Chinese during English lessons, it is not possible to conclude that all Chinese should be ruled out in English lessons. However, care must be taken not to overuse or misuse Chinese. This might outweigh the advantages and might even be counterproductive for the students in terms of target language learning (Hammerly 1982:321).

5.2 Why there is a tendency to overuse Chinese

There are certainly many reasons for overusing Chinese. One finding from my diary suggests that the overuse may be caused by the teacher's casual attitude towards teaching in English. The analysis of the reasons for my code-switching in Group B indicates that I sometimes code-switched not because the students needed the help of Chinese but because of my own reluctance to make an effort to teach in other ways through English. Sometimes physical fatigue led me to fall back on the use of Chinese as an easy-way-out. Sometimes I used Chinese because of my being overly sensitive or overly worried that students did not understand.

These feelings and attitudes are dangerous for two reasons. Firstly, they easily lead a teacher to rely on Chinese to teach. It emerges in the latter half of my diary for Group B that I began to like Chinese very much because it saved my time and effort. I liked to use it so much that I began to overuse it and was inclined to give in too easily to my desire to use Chinese. The habitual use of Chinese may turn into an overuse.

Secondly, the teacher may become so reliant on Chinese that he/she loses a balanced sense of judgement about when Chinese should be used. Examples can be cited from my diary.

It was often recorded in my diary that I relied on Chinese for reasons which I at that time thought were sound but which were in fact not. For example, I hurried over the explanation of words when the bell was going to ring. On the surface, there seemed to be sound pedagogical reasons for using Chinese. I could say with conviction that I used Chinese in order to finish what I had planned to teach during the lesson. But the introspective remark I made in the diary indicates that I code-switched at that time not because I wanted to save time but more because I wanted to save effort. I could have left the explanation to the next lesson when I would have had more time to use other methods to explain in English. However, my desire to get things done quickly with the least effort led me to code-switch not for the good of the students but more for my own convenience. Such motives for the use of Chinese are dangerous because they will probably lead the teacher to use Chinese blindly for no sound pedagogical reason. This leads to an unnecessary over-exposure to Chinese which may be counterproductive for the students' English language learning.

To avoid an overuse of Chinese, teachers should be alerted to the underlying psychological tendencies to rely on Chinese for nonpedagogical reasons. Such inclinations should be held in check so as to minimize any detrimental effects on the students' English language learning.

5.3 How the misuse of Chinese can be prevented

This question can be looked at from the perspective of the functions which should be performed in Chinese. The analysis of my diary entries shows that in Group B I used Chinese to perform the following five functions:

(1) explaining vocabulary,

(2) giving instructions,

(3) explaining language rules,

(4) talking to individual students,

(5) reprimanding students.

In Group A however, I only felt the need to use Chinese for two of the functions, that is, explaining vocabulary and giving individual help to students.

As regards giving instructions and explaining grammar rules, my experience in Group A proved that it was not necessary for me to use Chinese to perform those functions. Instructions and grammar rules can both be given in English with the help of gestures, visual aids and demonstrations (Willis 1981:2). As for instructions, even if some students do not immediately understand what they are asked to do, they can finally get the things done as required by observing what their classmates do or by trial and error. Regarding grammar rules, my experience with Group A showed that no explanation of rules in Chinese was really necessary to help them understand the difference in usage between the two patterns. Well-designed charts of examples on which the differences were underlined could help them see the differences easily.

The more important aspect of grammar teaching is in fact the use of the language. The teaching of grammar can be done through the giving of manipulative exercises followed by activities to put the language into communicative use. The use of Chinese will be even less necessary if the teaching material is well graded to suit the ability of the students.

As for reprimanding students, it was not necessary for me to reprimand the Group A students in Chinese because this class was on the whole very well behaved. In this class, no serious discipline problems arose such as students making a great deal of noise, walking to other seats or boys teasing girls.

Since the only two functions that I felt the need to be performed in Chinese in Group A were the explanation of vocabulary and giving individual help to the students, the rest of the discussion will focus on using Chinese to perform these two functions.

5.3.1 The teaching of vocabulary

The main question to be discussed here is: what kind of vocabulary should be taught in Chinese? Mckay points out one important aspect of learning vocabulary:

> While acquiring a language involves more than knowing all the words of the language, part of mastering a language is knowing a significant portion of the vocabulary of that language, and even more importantly, knowing when and how these words are used (1980:23).

Vocabulary learning is especially important in Form I because the students are in early secondary school. Their vocabulary is limited and needs building up.

A review of the categories of vocabulary which I explained in Chinese shows that in Form I, most of the vocabulary taught were names of objects, people, buildings and places. While very few action words or words carrying abstract ideas had to be taught, it would be useful to consider how such words should be taught.

Fries suggests that students should be taught to learn vocabulary from context (1945:57). Hammerly also warns teachers against one-to-one word lists and word-by-word translation because they do not offer the learner either a linguistic or non-linguistic context, both of which are important for correct vocabulary use. It thus seems that it is theoretically undesirable for English teachers to give word-by-word translation of the vocabulary.

Experience recorded in my diary also indicates that the majority of the vocabulary that I explained in Chinese in Group B was dealt with successfully in English in Group A. There is, in fact, no problem for the teachers in explaining in English if they are willing to put in time and effort and if they have patience. Even inadequate proficiency in English on the teacher's part is not a problem because it can be supplemented by non-verbal aids. There might be an argument that it is not worth the time and effort to explain at length a single word which can easily be translated in a second. However, my experience with the two groups showed that explaining vocabulary through English did not really take too much of my time. Even if it did take more time in Group A than in the other group, it was still worth the explanation time because the students were receiving meaningful input. The two groups were able to cover the whole syllabus with no time problem at all.

I felt I needed to use Chinese for that category of words about which students had no background knowledge such as names of places or words carrying too abstract a meaning (see Appendix B, Table B.2). However, such translation is not essential. If the students do not know the equivalents now, they will eventually learn them when they go to higher forms. However, to enrich the students' general knowledge, I eventually came to believe that it is better to give them the Chinese equivalents of words. In other words, for me, from a methodological point of view, it is not necessary for the teacher to explain in Chinese most of the words Form I students learn. However, it might be beneficial to give them the Chinese equivalents of terms that may help to enrich their general knowledge.

Thus, to prevent misuse of Chinese in teaching vocabulary, the findings from my diary seem to suggest two points:

(1) Teachers should confine their use of Chinese to explaining only the category of vocabulary that may help to enrich the students' general knowledge.

(2) Teachers should try other methods first (for example using visual aids and gestures) before resorting to Chinese.

5.3.2 Giving individual help to students

Individual teachers and students differ in their belief about whether or not talking to individual students is part of English language teaching. Some do not consider it part of the teaching process at all. Even if there is an overuse of Chinese in the performance of this function, the only adverse effect may be more limited exposure time to the target language for those individual students. It may not lead to more serious obstacles to language learning, such as the wrong association of ideas or wrong analogy between the two language systems. If the teachers feel the need for using the 'we-code' (Guthrie 1984:45) with individual students at certain moments, the use of the mother tongue will probably be effective in that situation.

Notes

1. In this chapter, the first person is used when my feelings are being recorded to reduce 'author distance' (Bailey and Ochsner 1983:193-194). The third person is used when I am generalizing in my discussion.

2. For these three situations (helping the students to understand, motivating the students to learn and giving individual help to the students) it might also be valuable to consider the distinction between the productive and receptive use of the mother tongue by both the teacher and tHe students. The main focus of this study was on the teacher's use of the students' mother tongue when teaching English as a foreign language. However, in fact, some of what have been reported and discussed here also involve the students' productive use of the mother tongue, situations in which the teacher allowed students to respond or even initiate the conversation using their mother tongue. This goes beyond the students' receptive use of the native language when they listened to the teacher's explanation in their mother tongue. The students' productive use of the mother tongue and the interaction between the students and the teacher was necessary to describe here. There were times in which the students' use of the mother tongue triggered a response from me in Chinese as well. This was then a reason for a specific

language choice on my part. This distinction between the productive and receptive use of the mother tongue has importance for teachers in considering the language choice for the classroom. They can have several alternatives from which to choose regarding the use of the mother tongue. These might include the following:

(1) Both the teacher and the students always speak only in English;
(2) the teacher always speaks in English but allows the students to respond and/or initiate conversation using the mother tongue under certain circumstances;
(3) the teacher and the students speak in the mother tongue under certain circumstances.

3. Based on informal comments of teaching colleagues, some of them feel that there is too much in the syllabus to be covered in the allotted time, thus they resort to the use of Chinese to speed up the lessons.
However if, in fact, most teachers feel there is too much to be covered in a syllabus using only English, then the issue may not be primarily one of language choice but of a realistic syllabus.

4. There are three main districts in Hong Kong: Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories. Most of the students in my school live in the New Territories. They seldom go to Kowloon or Hong Kong Island. Thus, they only know a few Chinese names of the streets in Kowloon and on Hong Kong Island.

5. As for the names of the countries of the world, they learn some of them in Chinese in primary school. They may also have heard the Chinese names of some countries through conversations with people or the mass media. However, there are some country names that they do not even know in Chinese.

6. To look at the issue from a broader point of view,there is also a social reason for the students to know the Chinese equivalent of a proper noun or a technical term. Pattanayak says:

> Instruction in the mother tongue helps in the search for self-affirmation, establishes group identity, satisfies the national urge for cultural rootedness and avoids fanaticism (1981:55).

If the students only know certain terms in English, their knowledge about that field is confined to the foreign language. In their daily lives, they will lack the Chinese terms for those particular concepts. This may dilute their sense of "self-affirmation, group identity and the national urge for cultural rootedness" (Pattanayak 1981:55). Thus, at least in some areas of learning, it is useful to let students know some terms in both languages to achieve "the twin social objectives of social solidarity and cultural pluralism" (Pattanayak 1981:55). In my study, the only examples were the names of countries and of streets in Hong Kong and the terms "atoll reef" and "tropical fish". However, this issue may be more important where content courses are generally taught in a foreign or second language than in English language lessons.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This chapter gives a summary of the findings of the study, implications for language teaching and research methodology as well as directions for future research.

6.1 Summary of the findings

There are four main findings in my study:

(1) Even though it was possible in this study for the teacher to teach English without saying a word in Chinese, it appeared that complete avoidance of the mother tongue was not possible. The teacher could not stop students from making associations in the mother tongue or explaining language items to one another after class in their native language. Also the teaching aids produced in a foreign language setting such as in Hong Kong may sometimes contain words written or said in the mother tongue.

(2) There appeared to be some advantages from the teacher's point of view in this study in using Chinese to perform certain functions, namely, to help students understand, to motivate students to learn, to help maintain discipline, to give individual help to students, to save time and to help students to gain general knowledge. However, it became obvious that care needed to be taken to prevent the overuse of Chinese to avoid counterproductive effects on English language learning.

(3) The teacher strongly committed to an English-only

approach when allowing herself to use some Chinese sometimes found it difficult to avoid giving in to an inclination to rely on Chinese, which resulted in an occasional overuse of Chinese.

(4) When the teacher used Chinese to explain vocabulary, she primarily used it to explain only certain categories of vocabulary, the translations of which hopefully helped to enrich the general knowledge of the students. However, this was done primarily when other methods seemed not to be succeeding.

6.2 Implications for English language teaching

There are two principal implications arising out of this study for English language teaching. One is related to policy making and one is related to teacher training.

6.2.1 Policy making

As regards the making of language policy, the implication of my study for myself is that I need to reconsider the "language policy" that I have chosen as a language teacher for my own English lessons and, as the Department Head of the English subject, for all the English lessons in my school. Even though no empirical proof has been given on the value of using Chinese, because I had discovered the advantages of using Chinese in English lessons through my own observation and experience, I began to use some Chinese in Group A in the second term. I will also allow myself to use some Chinese in the English lessons that I am going to teach in the years to come. As regards the language policy for English lessons in my school, I will now permit the English teachers in my school to use Chinese judiciously and occasionally in English lessons if they wish. It must of course be emphasized that they will not be allowed to overuse Chinese as this might cause counterproductive effects in terms of the language learning and teaching process. However, I will not try to persuade teachers who are already committed to an English-only approach to now use some Chinese as there is still insufficient evidence at time to suggest that one approach is better than the other.

Since the government is planning to revise the language policy for secondary schools in 1986, an increasing number of Anglo-Chinese schools may be using Chinese as the medium of instruction. Will individual teachers suddenly placed in a Chinese medium school environment be tempted to change their own language policy in English lessons? It is thus important that they should be warned against an overuse of Chinese and should be provided with guidelines regarding overuse or misuse of Chinese. It is hoped that findings in this study will give some insights into how to set such guidelines.

It is also necessary to consider another question. Guthrie points out that it is difficult for teachers who do not speak their students' first language to teach non-and-limited-English speaking children (1984:48). Gower and Walters also say:

> The teacher of a monolingual class who has a good understanding of the students' mother tongue can

> have a much easier time at the lower levels because he may know what language associations between the two languages (target language and mother tongue) will be made in the students' minds, what problems may be encountered and what short cuts, such as translation, can safely be made (1983:67).

If a teacher's knowledge of the students' mother tongue is an advantage in teaching lower forms English, it might be necessary to consider whether native speakers of English who do not have some knowledge of Chinese should be employed as English teachers at the Form I level. The students at this early secondary stage, especially remedial students may need the help of their mother tongue in the English language learning process.

6.2.2 Teacher training

My experience with the two groups shows that even though I at first felt uncomfortable with the use of Chinese, by forcing myself to use it, I finally saw the value of it and grew to like using it. An implication for teacher trainers might be that when teachers are trained to implement a new and possibly uncomfortable approach the trainers should encourage the teachers to at least try it out. By actually trying it out, the teachers might be able to understand the approach better before they gave a final judgment on its value. Also teacher trainers need to be sensitive to what a teacher might be going through, that is, the various stages of guilt, frustration and confusion such as were revealed in this study. Perhaps teacher trainers may find it useful to use excerpts from this diary as a way of getting teachers to consider their own reactions to their teaching during the teacher training process.

6.3 Implication for research methodology

Diary studies by language learners have been used to examine specific factors in the language learning process. Prior to this research, the use of a diary by a language teacher had been only at a more general level, that of a general self-evaluative instrument (Telatnik 1977). As has been shown in this research, a diary study may also be used by language teachers to examine specific issues related to language teaching, as was done in this study regarding the issue of language choice.

6.4 Directions for future research

What has been done in this study is an analysis and report of a single teacher's diary entries. No attempt has been made to provide empirical proof to further support the findings. It is suggested that further studies need to be done.

(1) It may perhaps be useful to replicate the study with different teacher or student populations at different form levels or having different family backgrounds and language proficiency.

(2) It is suggested that empirical studies need to be done on the abilities in different skills in English for classes undergoing monolingual and bilingual language teaching to see the effect each medium has on the students.

(3) It would also be useful if a triangulation approach could

be used to see if data from various points of view confirm one another. At this point, the findings are only from one teacher's point of view and cannot be used with confidence to propose definitive recommendation. However, these findings provide one perspective, only one point of a triangle. For example, the teacher's perceptions could be examined in conjunction with the students' perceptions and an outside observer's perceptions, or with the students' perceptions and the students' language proficiency attained in specific skill areas. The teacher's input could also be examined together with the actual student output and the students' language proficiency attained in specific skill areas. These could be done for students undergoing monolingual or bilingual language teaching. Such research would give more definite guidelines on if and how Chinese should be used in English lessons.

(4) If other studies confirm the value of using Chinese in some cases, it would be interesting to find out the answers to the following questions: What is the optimal time for moving from an "occasional translation" stage to the pure use of the target language in English lessons? How should teachers pass from an "occasional translation" to the strict use of the target language? It is hoped that answers to these questions might help to give more definite guidelines to teachers concerning how Chinese should be used in English lessons.

6.5 Concluding remark

As this is a diary study of a single teacher only, there has been no attempt to generalize the findings to apply to all teachers. However since no studies have been done to investigate the problem of the language of instruction in the EFL classroom in the Form I level in Hong Kong, it is hoped that this study can help to give some insights into this area. It is also hoped that this study will help to inspire researchers to explore this field further so that more concrete solutions can be given to the problems.

Since this diary study reflects my personal reactions, I would like to end it with a more personal closing which goes beyond the formal conclusions. I have personally found this diary study very beneficial to myself as a teacher and policy maker. It changed my attitude towards the language used in English lessons and gave me more insights into this area. It is hoped that other teachers and teacher trainers will find some value in it and can relate some of these personal experiences and reactions that I have shared in this study to their own teaching and teacher training so that they can also benefit from this diary study.

APPENDIX 1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE SAMPLE

Table 1.1 Information about the schools

Districts and types		Numbers
District	Hong Kong	4
	Kowloon	14
	New Territories	9
Types	Anglo-Chinese	23
	Chinese-Middle	4
	Grammar	25
	Technical	1
	Pre-vocational	1
	Government	3
	Aided	24

Table 1.2 The qualifications of the teachers

Question No.	Item	% of option chosen				
24	English teaching experience	less than 1 year	1-3 years	3-5 years	5-9 years	Above 9 years
		9.2	24.6	15.4	32.3	18.5
25	Experience in teaching Form I remedial English classes	less than 1 year	1-2 years			
		29.7	70.3			
26	Highest level of education	graduate school	university	university & Dip. Ed. or Cert Ed.	college of education	secondary school
		4.6	29.2	27.7	38.5	0
27	Specialization in English studies	English major	English minor	Neither English major nor minor		
		36.9	10.8	52.3		

APPENDIX 2 QUESTIONNAIRE

A questionnaire for Form I English remedial teachers

Below are some questions about your opinions on the language of instruction used in your Form I English remedial class(es). A set of alternative answers is provided for each question. Please indicate your choice by putting the letter preceding the category which best describes your opinion regarding that question (i.e. A or B, etc.) in the blank space provided.

1. How often do you use Chinese to assist the teaching of English in Form I English remedial classes?
   A.always B.very often C.occasionally D.seldom E.never

2. How much English/Chinese do you usually use in an English lesson?
   A. All English
   B. Mainly English and some Chinese
   C. Half English and half Chinese
   D. Mainly Chinese and some English

If you have answered 'never' in Question 1 and 'All English' in question 2, please go to Question 17.

3-8. How often do you use Chinese in Form I English remedial classes for the following purposes?

Please make your choice from the following 5 alternatives
A.always B.very often C.occasionally D.seldom E.never

3. to explain the meaning of vocabulary
4. to explain language rules or items
5. to give instructions
6. to explain class activities
7. to give school or class announcements
8. to scold students

9-16. What is your opinion about the following reasons for using Chinese in Form I English remedial classes?

Please make your choice from the following 5 alternatives
A.strongly agree B.agree C.neutral D.disagree
E.strongly disagree

9. I need to use Chinese because the English standard of my students is so low that they cannot understand English.
10. It is not worthwhile wasting time explaining things that can easily be done in Chinese.
11. I want to ensure that the students will not misunderstand what I mean.

12. The students will be more ready to respond and participate in class activities if I use Chinese.
13. The students expect me to use Chinese because Chinese is used in all other lessons.
14. The students keep requesting me to use Chinese.
15. I can express myself better in Chinese than in English.
16. Regardless of my ability to express myself in English, I feel more comfortable using Chinese because I am a Chinese.

17-23. What is your opinion about the following reasons for using English in Form I English remedial classes?

Please make your choice from the following 5 alternatives
A.strongly agree B.agree C.neutral D.disagree
E.strongly disagree

17. I think students should be exposed to as much English as possible in order to learn better.
18. The students will learn English in a natural way, thus acquiring more natural and fluent English.
19. It is a great challenge and fun for the students to try to work out what the teacher says and means in English.
20. The students will not get into the habit of relying on the use of Chinese when they find it difficult to express themselves in English.
21. The students expect me to use English because it is an English class.
22. I use English primarily because the school policy is to use English in the English classes.
23. I can express myself better in English than in Chinese.

24. What is your number of years of English teaching experience?
A. less than 1 year B. 1-3 years C. 3-5 years
D. 5-9 years E. Above 9 years

25. For how many years have you taught Form I English remedial classes?
A. less than 1 year B. 1-2 years

26. What is your highest level of education?
A. graduate school
B. university
C. university and a post-graduate teacher training course (e.g. Dip. Ed./Cert. Ed.)
D. college of education
E. secondary school

27. Were you an English major?
A. Yes, I was an English major.
B. No, I was an English minor.
C. No, I was not an English major nor an English minor.

APPENDIX 3 HOW CHINESE OR ENGLISH IS USED

Table 3.1 Frequency of Chinese used

Question No.	always (%)	very often (%)	occa-sionally (%)	seldom (%)	never (%)	mean	standard deviation
1	10.3	39.7	45.6	1.5	2.9	3.53	0.82
(Take : always=5, very often=4, occasionally=3, seldom=2, never=1)							

Table 3.2 Amount of Chinese(C)/English(E) used

Question No.	all E (%)	E>C (%)	1/2E+1/2C (%)	C>E (%)	mean	standard deviation
2	4.5	47.8	34.3	13.4	2.43	0.78
(Take : all E=4, E>C=3, 1/2E+1/2C=2, C>E=1)						

Table 3.3 Specific functions performed in Chinese

Question No.	specific functions	always (%)	very often (%)	occasionally (%)	seldom (%)	never (%)	no. of teachers	mean	standard deviation
3	To explain vocabulary	21.5	24.6	49.2	4.61	0	65	3.63	0.88
4	To explain language rules or items	16.9	40.0	32.3	10.8	0	65	3.63	0.89
5	To give instructions	3.1	21.9	46.9	25.0	3.1	64	2.97	0.85
6	To explain class activity	10.8	36.9	44.6	7.7	0	65	3.51	0.79
7	To give school or class announcements	30.8	30.8	35.4	3.1	0	65	3.89	0.89
8	To scold students	36.9	33.8	21.5	7.7	0	65	4.00	0.95
(Take : always=5, very often=4, occasionally=3, seldom=2, never=1)									

APPENDIX 4 REASONS FOR USING CHINESE OR ENGLISH ONLY

Table 4.1 Reasons for using some Chinese

Question No.	reasons	strongly agree (%)	agree (%)	neutral (%)	disagree (%)	strongly disagree (%)	no. of teachers	mean	standard deviation
9	Low English standard of students	29.7	48.4	7.8	14.1	0	64	3.94	0.97
10	Time-saving	7.8	29.7	26.6	28.1	7.8	64	3.02	1.11
11	Avoid misunderstanding	7.8	67.2	15.6	9.4	0	64	3.73	0.74
12	Students more ready to respond & participate	6.3	49.2	22.2	20.6	1.6	63	3.38	0.94
13	Chinese is used in all other lessons	1.6	15.6	28.1	40.6	14.1	64	2.50	0.98
14	Students' repeated request	1.6	17.2	34.4	35.9	10.9	64	2.63	0.95
15	The teacher expresses himself/herself better in Chinese	0	7.7	36.9	36.9	18.5	65	2.34	0.87
16	The teacher's ethnicity	3.1	7.7	26.2	41.5	21.5	65	2.29	1.00

(Take : strongly agree=5, agree=4, neutral=3, disagree=2, strongly disagree=1)

Table 4.2 Reasons for using English only

Question No.	reasons	strongly agree (%)	agree (%)	neutral (%)	disagree (%)	strongly disagree (%)	no. of teachers	mean	standard deviation
17	Greater exposure to English	29.2	58.5	10.8	1.5	0	65	4.15	0.67
18	Acquire English in a natural way	12.5	70.3	14.1	3.1	0	64	3.92	0.63
19	Challenging and fun to work out what the teacher says	4.6	50.8	26.2	16.9	1.5	65	3.40	0.88
20	Prevent students from forming the habit of relying on Chinese	4.6	69.2	15.4	10.8	0	65	3.68	0.73
21	Students expect English in English lessons	3.1	44.6	33.8	15.4	3.1	65	3.29	0.88
22	School policy to use English	4.7	40.6	32.8	20.3	1.6	64	3.27	0.90
23	The teachers express himself/herself better in English	4.6	16.9	49.2	29.2	0	65	2.97	0.80
(Take : strongly agree=5, agree=4, neutral=3, disagree=2, strongly disagree=1)									

APPENDIX 5 SAMPLE PAGES FROM THE DIARY

5.1 A sample page of the diary entries for Group B

(1B) 19/10/84 (Fri.) Day 4 Period 4 (E+C)

Lesson plan	Teaching procedure	Students' reaction	Teacher's reaction
1. Describe their family photo in pairs using "This is" & "That is"	Finish off the left over of last lesson i.e. read IE U1 S2 in pairs & bring out the pattern "This is" & "That is"	-I asked the students to read in parts by themselves. They read extremely badly. Thus I asked them to read in parts after me first. Then I asked them to read the dialogue in pairs by themselves. They were excited. Maybe they thought that it was "relax" time and began to chat in Chinese. After I had reminded them to speak in English, most of them switched into English but a few occassionally spoke Chinese. The noise was getting louder and louder.	
2. GEE ch.5 "This is" & "That is"			-I wondered why this class was always so noisy. Was it because they were basically more active? Did they behave in the same way in other classes?
		-When I asked them to take out their family photos, they were extremely excited. The noise was so loud that it was almost beyond control. I shouted "keep quiet".	
			-I was very nervous because I felt that I was losing control over them. Should I switch to Chinese?
		-While I was wondering what to do, a teacher came in and asked where the other group of students was.	

Plan for lesson 36	Teaching procedure	Students' reaction	Teacher's reaction
			-I was so embarrassed! Luckily, after the interruption, they quieted down & I began to get control over them again.
1.	As planned	1. The students spoke excitedly in English when talking about their family photos.	
2.	As planned	2. When I explained the usage of "this is", "that is" tq the students, I was not sure whether they understood me or not, so I used Chinese to explain again.	2. However, I was so nervous that I thought I didn't make myself clear even when I spoke Chinese. -I happened to see 1B's Form Teacher after school. Strangely, she said 1B was a very quiet class & 1A was very naughty & noisy. She taught 1B Chinese.

5.2 A sample page of the original diary entries for group A

(1A) 19/10/84 (Fri.) Day 6 Period 5 (E)

Lesson plan	Teaching procedure	Students' reaction	Teacher's Reaction
As in 1B	As in 1B		-After getting out of the noisy 1B classroom, I felt a great relief when I entered the 1A classroom because the students were sitting there quietly waiting for me to come.

Lesson plan	Teaching procedure	Students' reaction	Teacher's reaction
		-I started off better with this group. Because of the experience I had in the last lesson, I didn't ask the students to read in pairs by themselves right away. Instead, I made them read after me first. They were reading fairly well. -When the students were asked to read in pairs, Kam Tim didn't know what to do. His neighbour told him what to do in Chinese. Some talked in Chinese.	
	1. As planned	1. Nearly the whole class forgot to bring their family photos, so each one stood up and told me in English that they had forgotten to bring the photos. -Many didn't understand what to do with the photo even after my explanation, so I had to go round the class pointing at the photos explaining to each pair again in English. At last they understood and did as instructed.	1. It seems that so far, the students are only confident about reproducing the classroom language taught or reading out manipulative drills. They cannot use English for real communication very well.
	2. As planned		2. I drew a very clear chart with coloured chalk on the blackboard & explained the usage of "This is" and "That is". I was

Lesson plan	Teaching procedure	Students' reaction	Teacher's reaction
			sure that they understood what I said because when I asked if they understood or not, they nodded vigorously.
		2. They were eager to volunteer answers in SEE.	

5.3 A sample page of the revised diary entries for Group B (using some Chinese)

19/10/84 (Friday) Day 4 Period 4

I asked the students to read <the dialogue> in pairs by themselves. They read extremely badly so I asked them to read <the dialogue> in parts after me <and then read in pairs to each other.> <Suddenly> the students became very excited. Perhaps they thought it was now "relaxation time". They began to chat in Chinese. Then I reminded them that they should speak in English immediately. But a few occasionally spoke Chinese.

The noise was getting louder and louder. I wondered why this class was always so noisy. Was it because they were basically more active <than others>? Did they behave in the same way in other classes?

I asked them to take out the family photos that <they were supposed to bring to class today>. They became extremely excited. The noise was getting so loud that it was almost beyond control. I was very nervous because I felt that I was <beginning to lose> control over the class. I shouted <loudly in English>, "Keep quiet!" <They still kept on talking>. Should I switch to Chinese <to stop the noise>? I was wondering what to do. Suddenly, a teacher came in and asked where the other group of students was. I was so embarrassed! However, because she interrupted, the class luckily quieted down. I got control over them again!

<Then I asked the students to talk in pairs about their family photos using the "This is..." and "That is..." patterns>. They talked to each other in English excitedly.

After that, I explained how "This is ..." and "That is..." should be used. I was not sure whether they understood me or not <because they did not give any response>, so I used Chinese to explain again. But this time, I was so nervous that I thought I hadn't made myself clear enough even when I was speaking Chinese. However, the students were eager to give out the answers in the book SEE.

I happened to see 1B's Form teacher after school. Strangely, she said that 1B was a very quiet class and 1A was very naughty and noisy. She taught 1B Chinese! (p.68)

Key : < > = parts where meaning is clarified

5.4 A sample page of the revised diary entries for Group A (using English only)

19/10/84 (Friday) Day 4 Period 5

After getting out of the noisy classroom of 1B, I felt much relieved to be in this class. The students were sitting quietly waiting for me to come.

I started off better with this group. Because of the experience I had in the last lesson, I knew I shouldn't ask the students to read the dialogue in pairs right away. I asked them to read after me first. They were reading fairly well. Then they were asked to read in pairs. Ka Wah didn't know what to do. His neighbours told him what to do in Chinese. Then <the students near him> began to talk in Chinese.

<I asked the students to take out the family photos that they were supposed to bring to class today>. Nearly the whole class had forgotten to bring them, so each one stood up and told me in English that they had forgotten to bring the photos. It seems that so far, this class is only confident about reproducing the classroom language taught or reading out manipulative drills. They cannot use English for real communication purpose very well.

<I told the students to talk about their family photos in pairs, using the patterns "This is..." and "That is...">. But many of them did not understand what they should do. Thus, I had to go round the class, pointing at the photographs and re-explaining to each group what they should do in English. At last they understood and did as instructed.

Then we moved on to the exercises in the book GEE. I drew a very clear chart with coloured chalk on the blackboard to explain the usage of "This is..." and "That is...". I was sure they understood me because they nodded vigorously. They were very eager to volunteer answers to the exercises. (p.67)

Key : < > = parts where meaning is clarified

—— = names changed

APPENDIX 6 FUNCTIONS FOR WHICH CHINESE WAS USED

Table 6.1 Vocabulary explained in Chinese

Category no.	Categories of vocabulary	Words
1	Names of objects	colour pencil, glue, aspirin, boot, torch, slippers, light bulb, vitamin, shampoo, batteries, sandals, wig, report, atoll reef, tropical fish
	Names of food	hamburger, orange juice, spring roll, turnip, Chinese sausage roll, prawn dumpling in soup
	Names of role/ occupation	cousin, manager, salesgirl, monitor, inspector
	Names of places or institutions	aquarium, laboratory, chapel, mansion, factory, farm, seaside, Hong Kong Royal Police, Burma, Greek, Haiphong Road, Hankow Road, Chatham Road, Pacific Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, Himalayas, U.S.A., U.K., Philipines
	Names of school subjects	Geography, Economics and Public Affairs, History
2	Words showing events	sunset, roll call (time for marking registers)
3	Words showing actions	underline, scream, questioning
4	Words carrying abstract meaning	abstract, over, vowel

Table 6.2 Instructions given in Chinese

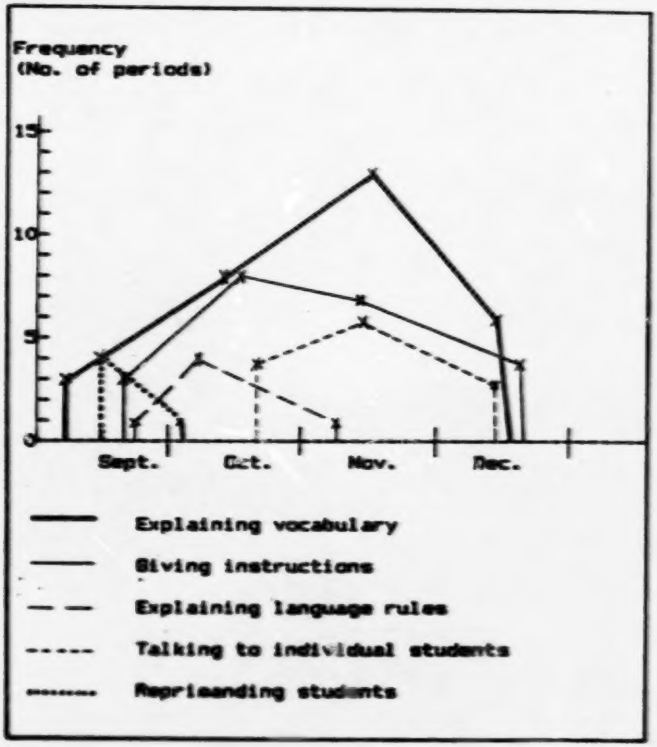
Category no.	Categories of instructions	Instructions
1	Instructions for class activities	- Rules for the classroom language card game - Rules for the zoo game - Rules for taking a tour around the school - Rules for using the Reading Workshop cards - Rules for using class-set readers - Rules on the Supplementary Daily Reading Scheme - Rules for doing a listening group activity - Instructions for how to get cards - Putting sentences in the right order - Putting sentences together to form one paragraph - Putting quotations marks around the patterns - The directions for filling in the cover of dictation books and writing dates - The directions for marking their classmates' dictation books - Crossing out an exercise - Instruction to write on the back page of a questionnaire
2	Rules for classroom discipline	- Explaining punishment for breaking rules
3	Assignments	- Bring a family photograph to class for the next lesson - Assigning tests and examinations - Assigning sentences to study at home - When to hand in exercise books

Table 6.3 Language rules explained in Chinese

No.	Language items or patterns
1	'is' 'are' 'am'
2	's and s'
3	"A" "An" "The"
4	"at" "in" "on"
5	There is ... ... has
6	This is ... That is ...

APPENDIX 7 FREQUENCY OF USING CHINESE FOR EACH FUNCTION

Line graph showing the frequency of using Chinese for each function in each month



APPENDIX B WAYS OF EXPLANATION AND GIVING INSTRUCTIONS

Table B.1 Successful ways of explaining vocabulary

Categories of vocabulary	No. of vocabulary items	Group B (E+C)	Group A (E)
		Vocabulary translated in Chinese	Methods that successfully explain the vocabulary
Names of objects	1	coloured pencil	showing the object
	2	glue	showing the object
	3	aspirin	using gesture
	4	boot	drawing the picture on the blackboard
	5	torch	explaining its uses
	6	slippers	explaining how and when we use them
	7	light bulb	drawing it on the blackboard
	8	vitamin	naming the vitamins
	9	shampoo	students giving the Chinese equivalent themselves
	10	batteries	students giving the Chinese equivalent themselves after my explanation
	11	sandals	using gestures
	12	wig	using gestures and description
	13	report	showing the sample in the textbook
Names of food	14 15	hamburger orange juice	showing the picture and some students shouting out the Chinese equivalent
	16 17 18 19	spring roll turnip Chinese sausage roll prawn dumpling in soup	showing the students cards with English and Chinese names of the food on them. Students who could see the Chinese words shouted out the Chinese equivalent

Names of people	20	cousin	drawing charts of family trees on blackboard with the help of coloured chalk
	21	manager	some students shouted out the Chinese equivalent and I confirmed it
	22	salesgirl	using examples of what she did
	23	monitor	appointing one student to do the job instead of asking who the monitor was to avoid explaining the word monitor
	24	inspector	description of his rank and job
Names of places and institutions	25	electrical shop	giving examples of goods sold there
	26	aquarium	one student shouted out the Chinese equivalent
	27 28	laboratory chapel	showing the location of the place in the school
	29 30 31 32	mansion factory farm seaside	students giving out the Chinese equivalent
	33	Hong Kong Royal Police	students referring to the Chinese characters in the textbook
Names of school subjects	34 35 36	Geography Economics and Public Affairs History	giving examples of the content of the subject
Words showing events	37	sunset	description
	38	roll call	giving examples of what is usually done during roll call
Words showing actions	39	underline	drawing an example on the blackboard
	40	scream	demonstrating the sound
	41	questioning	description of the situation

Words carrying abstract meaning	42	over	using gesture
	43	vowel	listing the vowels and reading the sounds

Table 8.2 Unsuccessful ways of explaining vocabulary without using Chinese

Categories of vocabulary	Group B (E+C)	Group A (E)	Possible reasons
	vocabulary translated in Chinese	methods that unsuccessfully explain the vocabulary	
Names of things	atoll reef	showing the picture and explanation	lack of general knowledge
	Tropical fish	showing the picture and explanation	lack of general knowledge
Names of places	Burma Greek	pointing out the places on the map	lack of knowledge in Geography
	Haiphong Road Hankow Road Chatham Road		lack of knowledge about places not near where they live
	Pacific Ocean Mediteranean Sea Himalayas U.S.A. U.K. Phillippines	pointing out the places on the world map	lack of knowledge in Geography
Words having abstract meaning	abstract	giving examples	the concept is too abstract

Table 8.3 How to give instructions in both groups

Categories of instruction	Category no.	Group B (E+C) Instructions explained in Chinese	Group A (E) Methods that successfully explain the instruction without using Chinese
Instructions for activities	1	Activity of taking a tour round the school	Verbal explanation and gesture
	2	Rules for classroom language card game	Going around the groups to help
	3	Rules for the zoo game	Repetition of explanation & teacher and student demonstration
	4	Rules on the Supplementary Daily Reading Scheme	Drawing samples on the blackboard
	5	Rules for using the Reading Workshop Cards	Holding up the cards and exercise books to demonstrate
	6	Rules for using class-set readers	Holding up the books to demonstrate
	7	Instructions on how to do a listening group activity	Going around the class to move the students to different places
	8	Instruction for students who didn't finish certain cards to come out and get cards	Changing the instruction and asking students to come out by rows to get their cards
	9	Putting sentences in the right order	Writing several sentences on the blackboard to demonstrate
	10	How to put sentences together to form one paragraph	Giving examples to illustrate
		Crossing out an exercise	Illustrating the idea on the blackboard

	11	Instructions to write on the back of the page of the questionnaire	Holding up the piece of paper to show where the back of the page is
	12	Rules for filling in the cover of dictation books and writing dates	Drawing the example on the blackboard and walking round the class to give individual help by pointing at relevant places in their books
	13	Putting quotation marks around the "There is..." "There are..." patterns	Drawing an example on the blackboard
	14	The way to mark the classmates' Dictation books	Holding up a dictation book and demonstrating with a pencil
Rules for class discipline	15	Punishment for breaking rules	Verbal explanation with the help of gestures
Instructions for assignments	16	Instructing the students to prepare for a test and dictation	Writing out the assignment on the blackboard and asking the students to copy it down in their Assignment Book to bring home for their parents to sign
	17	Assigning material to be prepared for examination	Writing the assignment on the blackboard for students to copy down in their Assignment Book
	18	Assigning some sentences for the students to study at home	Writing the assignment on the blackboard and asking them to copy it down in their Assignment Book
	19	Bringing a family photograph to class for the next lesson	Showing the students a photograph
	20	When to hand in Supplementary Daily Reading Exercise Books	Refusing to take the students' books when they handed them in at the wrong time

Table 8.4 Methods of explaining language rules

No. of patterns	Group B (E+C)	Group A (E)
	Language rules explained in Chinese	Methods that successfully explain the rules without using Chinese
1	Verb to be	Writing out examples in two columns and underlining the differences between the patterns with coloured chalk
2	"There is..." and "... has"	
3	"This is..." and "That is..."	
4	's and s'	Same as above. Also doing some exercises to illustrate the pattern and praising the students who answered correctly
5	"The"	Giving examples
6	Rules governing the use of "at" "in" "on"	Explanation and examples

APPENDIX 9 REASONS FOR USING CHINESE

Table 9.1 Areas where students have difficulties

Students' response	Areas in which Chinese was used		
	Explaining vocabulary	Giving instructions	Explaining language rules
1. Students did not understand	1. monitor 2. salesgirl 3. Shanghai 4. Kwangchou 5. roll call 6. History 7. Geography 8. E.P.A. 9. cousin	1. Instructions for dictation 2. Introducing a group listening activity 3. When to hand in exercises 4. Assignment for examination 5. Assigning sentences to be studied at home 6. Crossing out an exercise 7. How to do supplementary reading 8. How to play a card game 9. How to play a classroom language game 10. Underlining sentences 11. Introducing ETV programmes 12. Putting sentences together to form paragraphs	1. verb to be 2. possessives
2. Students did not know or misunderstood the meaning	10. Burma 11. Greek 12. manager 13. Haiphong Rd. 14. Chatham Rd. 15. Hankow Rd. 16. representative 17. Pacific Ocean 18. Himalayas 19. Mediterranean Sea 20. U.S.A. 21. U.K. 22. Philippines		

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